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PlayStation[®] 2

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FIRST AUSSIE REVIEW!

FORD **VS** HOLDEN

HRT thunders onto V8 Supercars 2!



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GTA SAN ANDREAS

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ISSUE 32 OCTOBER 2004
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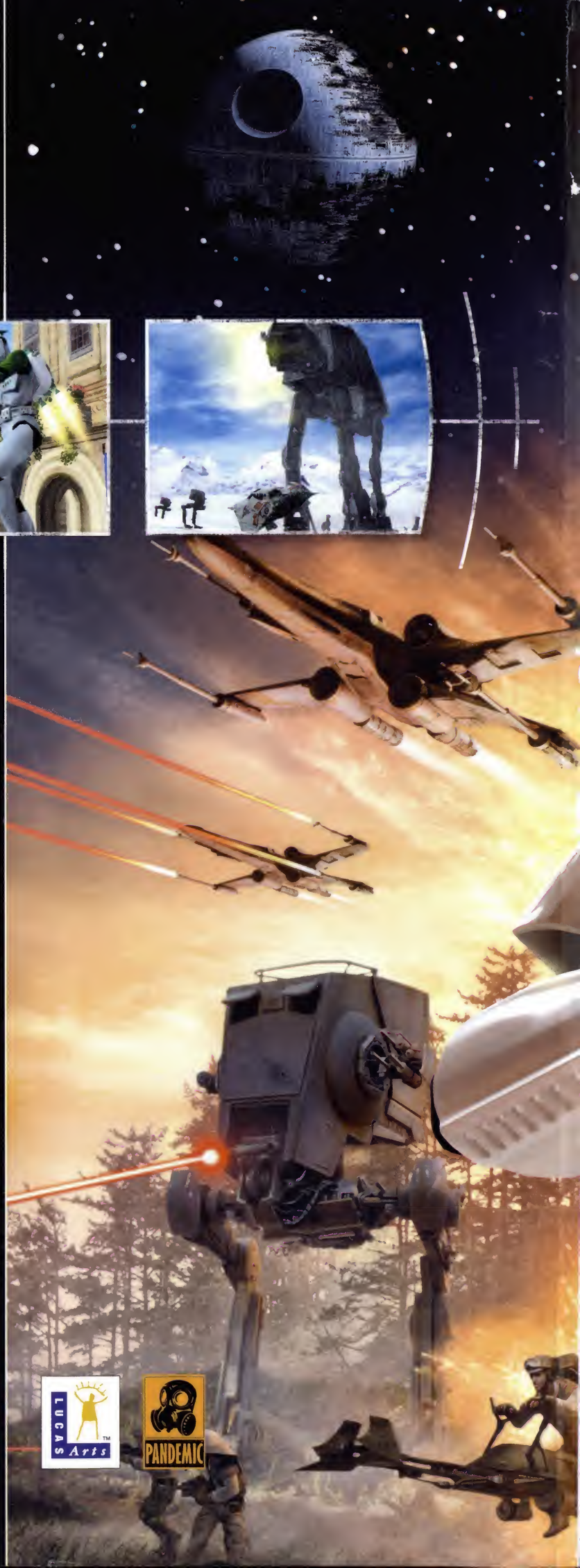
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ROCKY LEGENDS



THE INCREDIBLES



BURNOUT 3



THE X-FILES



PlayStation 2

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-AUSTRALIA

PlayStation 2

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**"... the
realisation
that gamers
come from all
age groups
must happen
sooner rather
than later."**

EDITOR'S LETTER

Games are for kids. Games aren't for kids. Depending on who you talk to nowadays, you'll either be told one or the other and despite the fact that the "interactive entertainment" industry is more developed than ever – it seems that as a society we're still struggling to comprehend what games should and shouldn't be.

The truth is, the videogames industry is starting to mimic the movie industry. Technology aside, videogames are a mainstream reality and that's why there's so much uproar from conservative circles when games that clearly deal with adult subject matter (like *San Andreas*) are released. It is somewhat understandable that some people still regard videogames as the domain of kids – but the realisation that gamers come from all age groups must happen sooner rather than later. OPS2 readers include both young children and pensioners!

So now, we have games made specifically for kids and some aimed at adults. It's exactly like the movie industry. The only difference is the movie industry is more established and no longer attracts the same headlines that still get targeted toward games ("that violent games teach kids to kill" is just one).

This issue, we're excited about two new games in particular, nearing completion. And guess what: one is targeted at young gamers and the other is going to be a blockbuster geared toward us older heads. Turn to page 50 to meet the *Incredibles* or flick to page 40 where we reveal even more astonishing new details and screenshots from *San Andreas*. The latest game in the *GTA* series in particular, is so phenomenal that we wait with bated breath to see what sort of greater effect it will have on the rest of the industry.

Oh, and be sure to check out the country's first V8 *Supercars 2* review too. This big monster has been chomping at the bit and the addition of HRT is a massive coup.

Richie Young

RICHIE YOUNG
Editor

ARE YOU A FORD OR HOLDEN FAN?



NARAYAN PATTISON

"Fords? Holdens? It's all the same to me. They're both just as easy to take down in *Burnout 3*. Now, it's time to get back to trying to beat Paul's \$27465,360 record in the crash mode."



TRISTAN OGILVIE

"One played Han Solo and Indiana Jones, while the other is a washed up singer who is only famous for saying 'Touchdown!' on *Idol*. There's really no contest. I'm sorry, what?"



MICHAEL DEVRIES

"'83 Commodore VH/SLE, midnight blue, velour interior – you were the love of my life. I miss you honey. To the little punk who stole her: may you perish in hell! Aarggh!"



PAUL FREW

"My first girlfriend called me a roaring lion when we were fooling around in the back seat of my Commodore. Since then, there's only ever been one car for me."



MICHELLE STARR

"Hmm... well, I can't say I'm a huge fan of *Australian Idol*, so it's thumbs down on Mark Holden. And do you mean Ford Fairlane, Ford Prefect or Harrison Ford? Actually, they're all good..."



ANTHONY O'CONNOR

"There's only one car for me: a red '58 Plymouth Fury called Christine. Ford and Holden are fine but until they start give their cars demonic entities – I shall be taking my business elsewhere."



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Turn to page 76 for all the details...



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PlayStation 2

OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE



on the dvd

PLAYABLE DEMOS

BURNOUT 3: TAKEDOWN



If you like your KABOOMs [as we most certainly do], mosey on over here to check out the latest high-speed action from *Burnout*. You want cool? this is cool. The explosions! The speed! The nitro! 'Scuse us while we go over here and gibber for a while...

Make your rivals go up in horrible fireball style as you take on the nasty CPUs in a race to the finish. Get in the practise now for the online later, when you're going to want to smush your mates' cars into little crumpled twisted balls of metal. Learn to play dirty, 'cause this is one naughty little racer that's as dirty as they come...



DISTRIBUTOR: EA
GAME TYPE: RACING
OUT: SEPTEMBER
PLAYERS: 1
(1-6 FULL GAME)

STAR WARS: BATTLEFRONT



You know those wars, with stars in them? And how they battle? Well, actually they don't, it's the people. Lots of people running around and shooting lasers at each other.

This is a nice little exclusive sticky at the battle between the Rebels and the Empire on Ewok-infested Endor. Pick your side, and from five characters with different weapons, between single and two-player, and start shootin' stars. A galaxy far, far away is now in your loungeroom!



DISTRIBUTOR: EA
GAME TYPE: SHOOTER
OUT: SEPTEMBER
PLAYERS: 1-2
(1-16 FULL GAME)

CRASH BANDICOOT: TWINSANITY



That sneaky orange marsupial is giving Cortex a run for his money – stick your nose into three sample levels to see what he's up to this time. Is he fighting Cortex or saving him?!



DISTRIBUTOR: VIVENDI
GAME TYPE: PLATFORM
OUT: SEPTEMBER
PLAYERS: 1

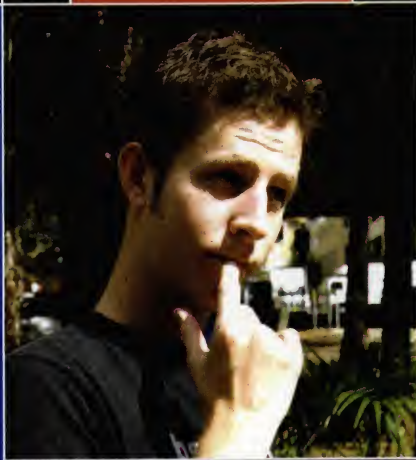
RIBBIT KING



DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI
GAME TYPE: PARTY
OUT: SEPTEMBER
PLAYERS: 1-2
(1-4 FULL GAME)

Fancy yourself a golfer? Bet you haven't seen anything quite like this! Try your hand at Frolf – the game that combines golfing with...frogs?

Think you can take on Pan-Pan, the panda who fancies himself a kung-fu expert? Well, you probably can.



Salutations, fellow gamelings! How y'all been? Awesome? Awesome! And for all you awesome folks out there, we have an extra-awesome lineup for this month's demo disc. Make sure you check out *Burnout 3*, and give *Star Wars: Battlefront* a whirl for some Stormtrooper-on-Stormtrooper action.

For horror buffs, we've got the freakishly telepathic *Psi-Ops* and *Second Sight* up for comparison, as well as a huge extended demo of *Silent Hill 4: The Room*. If that's too tame for you, roll on over to check out the bloodcurdling game of 'Frolf' in *Ribbit King*... if you dare!

ED LOMAS

ED LOMAS
Associate Editor

PS To use this DVD, load it up on your PS2. Then scroll between games and rolling demos with the \downarrow and \uparrow keys. To choose within a section use \leftarrow and \rightarrow . Press \otimes to start up your choice. Please note, you may have to reset your PS2 after some demos.

YOUR DISC

Every issue, *Official PlayStation 2 Magazine* brings you something no other magazine can – playable demos. Offering exclusive levels, tracks and missions, our playable DVD enables you try the very latest PS2 games before you buy, often weeks, even months before release. Why risk your hard-earned cash on a \$100 game when you can try it out on our cover-mounted DVD? From *GT3* and *MGS2* to *TimeSplitters 2* and *Final Fantasy X-2*, we've always featured playable demos of the games that matter. Throw in top quality video footage of the hits of the future and our DVD is the best bargain on the shelves.

DISC PROBLEMS?

If your disc isn't working properly, simply send it back to this address for a replacement.

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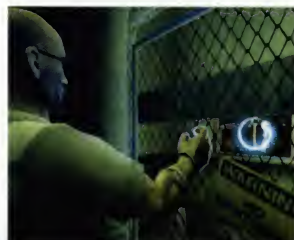
SECOND SIGHT



DISTRIBUTOR: **ATARI**
GAME TYPE: **ACTION**
OUT: **SEPTEMBER**
PLAYERS: **1**

Second Sight is definitely worth a second look. After last month's sighting, we thought it high time you got a chance to experience this little morsel for yourself.

Sneak through the facility, using your powers of telekinesis, self-healing (you'll need this one) and psi-blasting. Use the D-pad to scroll through your powers. Use **△** to target something, and **□** to manipulate or change targets. If you're spotted, it's pretty much over, so use as much discretion as possible. Remember: the powers are cool, but it takes more than a few mind-tricks to fool your enemies.



SILENT HILL 4: THE ROOM



DISTRIBUTOR: **ATARI**
GAME TYPE: **HORROR**
OUT: **SEPTEMBER**
PLAYERS: **1**



There's a mystery here, and it's up to you to start unravelling. Play through the first level of *Silent Hill 4* to get a feel for the nastiness. Bet you thought you were a hardened survival horror veteran, didn't you? You probably needed to change those pants anyway.

Check everywhere for weapons – there's a gun, a lead pipe (gotta love the lead pipe), a baseball bat and a shovel lying around if you can find them – and follow the metaphorical rabbit down the evil hole to see what awaits.

PSI-OPS



DISTRIBUTOR: **RED ANT**
GAME TYPE: **ACTION**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1**

There's not one, but two Psi-action tidbits for you to whet your appetite this month! *Psi-Ops* is a bit more forgiving – boost your skills on the training level to get a feel for the controls before tackling the hard stuff. The difficulty is all in your mind...



VAN HELSING



DISTRIBUTOR: **VIVENDI**
GAME TYPE: **ACTION**
OUT: **NOW**
PLAYERS: **1**



You've got two levels to investigate here. "Escape from Castle Frankenstein" sees you battling hordes of nasties with your trusty guns. "The Forest Path" ups the stakes (ho ho) by sticking the enemies in the air. Buffy it certainly ain't.

reel footage

Exclusive trailers for three of the hottest platform games of 2004!



WRC 4

Check out the cars of the 2004 WRC in action. Enjoy the light reflecting off the cars' windows. Sigh in admiration at the smooth cornering. Win as the cars bounce over rocky trails. Watch the mud spatter and shed a tear for how good racing games consistently look nowadays.



SILENT HILL 4: THE ROOM

If the extended demo wasn't enough, have a look at this amazing movie, with a soundtrack teaser. Dim the lights, pump the volume, and wrap yourself in a blanket to check out the latest chiller from the *Silent Hill* series. Get down on your knees and give thanks. The end.

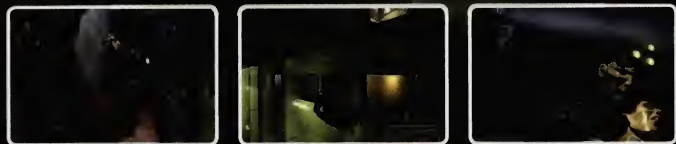


DJ DECKS & FX

To help you get into the swing of being MC That Guy, we offer this sweet clip. Get a learning for the mixing desk, because baby, this ain't no cakewalk, and you're going to need it. Groove with da best, and get a feel for da beat. Now that's smooooth.

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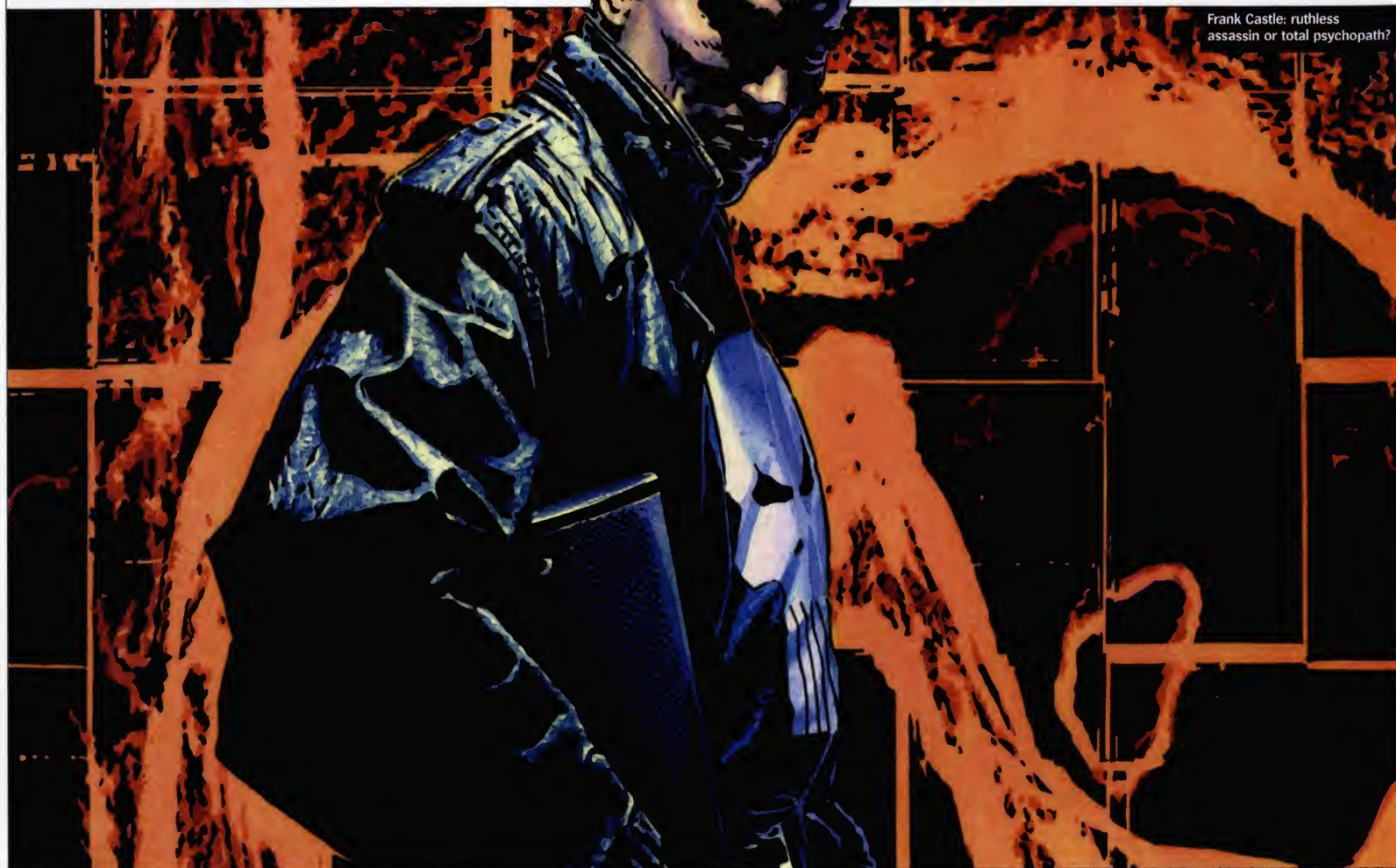


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loading.

EDITED BY NARAYAN PATTISON



Frank Castle: ruthless assassin or total psychopath?

THE PUNISHMENT

Volition show us how it's done



Out of all the "superheroes" out there, the Punisher hardly even qualifies. He's psychotic, has no special powers, and is completely ruthless. The only quality he has which might put him in the same league is his remorseless, burning desire to see bad guys gone. However, it's only for his own satisfaction and personal vendetta, and he uses any means necessary - making him at once both one of the coolest and one of the most unique (anti) heroes ever to grace the shelves of our comic stores.

The lads at Volition (who made *Red Faction*) are bringing the gruff man in the skull shirt to the PS2, and we flew to the US to take an exclusive sneak peek.

Naturally, they are very proud of their baby, and they spent quite some time demonstrating the Punisher's various killing moves, all the while his soft internal monologue, complete with bad puns, running in the background. We

could only look on, our awe-stricken faces bathed by the light of the screen.

Volition tell us there are over 60 quick kill moves so far, and by the time the game hits the shelves, it might be more. Imagine it - opening fire on a bunch of baddies, then whipping out your bowie knife, stabbing one guy in the face, stuffing a grenade into another guy's mouth, and another hail of bullets on the next round of royal ugly dudes. Then, you get to the special kills. We saw a guy put into an open fire, another guy shoved into a woodchipper and yet another crushed to death in a sliding door. All of this on top of running around pumping lead into everything that moves. This game does one thing, and it does it very, very well.

The whole game hinges on the Punisher himself being mentally unbalanced. He does the things he does without remorse, and Volition make sure



that you never forget the reason for it - as you run around, you'll hear random sounds, such as children's laughter, and it throws you off balance. Until you realise the sound is what The Punisher is hearing in his head as he slaughters.

The build we saw still wasn't quite finished, but based on what we've seen so far, we can tell you this: Bring. It. On. Now! **MS**



DYNAMIC DUO

PLATFORM FAVES RETURN

Crash and Spyro want the top spot!

Spyro: purple dragon, cutish, very popular. Crash Bandicoot: orange, kind of psycho, again – very popular.

Not only have these gaming icons been around since the early days on PlayStation, their new titles still manage to sell faster than drugs at a Pink Floyd concert. Their upcoming PS2 titles were recently on show at Vivendi's Asian Games Summit where *OPS2* snagged a sneaky look.

In *Spyro: A Hero's Tail*, our favourite dragon is back with the solid platforming action players have come to love him for. With new breath powers, items, and the return of all the main characters, expect this 3D platformer to

be on shelves by Christmas.

Crash Bandicoot: Twinsanity looked a tad more updated, however. Most notably, the worlds now seem more open. The humour has also been pumped up, with famous *Ren and Stimpy* scribe, Jordan Reichek, penning the game's script. In a ludicrous and surprising move, Crash must team up with arch nemesis, Cortex (who is dressed as a woman!), to get through the game. Expect plenty of laughs when it hits shelves before the end of the year. In terms of gameplay, Vivendi tells us that it is committed to returning both series to the top of the platforming tree, as neither has managed to impress on recent outings. **JE**



MOVIE MURMURS

The latest news and rumours in the world of film and DVD

AFTER MANY LONG YEARS, someone has decided to do something with the 1973 horror classic *The Exorcist*. That someone was Warner Bros, who recruited Renny Harlin and writer of the original book/screenplay William Peter Blatty to make *Exorcist: The Beginning*. The film follows the story of priest Lancaster Merrin's first encounter with the demon Pazuzu in deepest Africa – years prior to the events of *The Exorcist*. With snazzy new effects and a new cast, it will be interesting to see if the film can live up to *The Exorcist* name.

WE'VE ALL BEEN HEARING A LOT ABOUT PSI-OPS LATELY, and if rumour holds true, we're about to hear a whole lot more. Rumours are circulating that *Spyhunter* producers Adrian Askarieh and Chuck Gordon are looking to make a film. It's still in early stages yet – the pair hope to pitch their idea to studios sometime very, very soon, and plan to release the film in conjunction with the game's sequel.

OILY FUN

THE RAW SMACKDOWN!

How long is it since you've been smacked?

Heads up to the wrestling fans – we're soon to see a brand-spanking-new WWE title exclusively gracing our beloved console. For the first time ever, the two opposing wrestling factions – *Smackdown* and *Raw* – will come together in a clash for the championship.

Featuring characters from the two hit TV programs, and written by gen-yoo-wine WWE scriptwriters, WWE: *Smackdown vs. Raw* will be a wrestling spectacular not to be missed.

And there is plenty here for the wrestling maniac. There will be over 50 playable characters, and a story mode with branching paths. Moreover, the entire game will be voice-acted by the characters' real-life counterparts, including Vince McMahon.

The competition only increases with the game's new "Create a Belt" mode, where you can win your friends' beloved and hard-earned championship titles. Get your tights on baby – you're going to the top! **MS**




"Has anyone ever told you, you were hot?"



ACCORDING TO OUR SOURCES, Dreamworks and Paramount are in the development stages of a live-action *Transformers* movie. Tom DeSanto, who executive-produced the *X-Men* movies, wrote the story and is co-producing the film with Don Murphy, of *League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* and *From Hell* fame. Steven Spielberg is set to executive produce. No actors or scriptwriters have yet been confirmed.

THE PLATFORM AND GAME HAVE NOT EVEN REALLY BEEN SEEN YET, but already a film is in the works for the first game announced for the PSP, *Death, Jr.* The game, starring the son of the Grim Reaper, will be a launch title. It seems the game is hot property – a comic book has been arranged by underground artist Ted Naifeh also.

A Black Hawk Army helicopter is shown in a steep climb, viewed from a low angle. The helicopter is dark green and tan, with "ARMY" written on its side. The main rotor blades are blurred from motion. The background shows a hazy, mountainous landscape under a cloudy sky.

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STARR REPORT

A different game



The Victorians used to make sleeves to cover the legs of their tables, since "legs" were a touchy subject, and one did not expose ladies to something so indelicate. In ancient Egypt, harming a cat was punishable by death. In Japan, it is considered bad manners to blow your nose in public.

In the here and now, videogames are highly controversial for the way they constantly push at the edges of taboos – namely, sex, and violence. These two topics pretty much came to a head with the prostitute trick in *GTA3*, and the end result was that the feature was excised from the game as it appeared on our southern shores. Every week, it seems, some game or another is blamed for a violent crime, or someone gets upset about how videogame content is inappropriate for small children.

But when you think about it, it's just the same old stuff. Games developers are constantly trying to think of ways to make blood splatter more realistically, or how to make a skimpy outfit that reveals everything without revealing a thing. As far as testing boundaries goes, it's pretty tame. Violence is as violence does, but it's nothing new.

Why is the games industry so afraid to go beyond what it is? As the technology develops and the original gaming generation gets older, gaming is evolving into something that is increasingly an art form and not just a tool to entertain kids.

And it is the role of art to hold a mirror up to society. If we hold this to be true of videogames, I am a six-foot blonde goddess, and the guy sitting next to me on the train is packing heat because he's going to try and single-handedly infiltrate ASIO later on today.

No, we don't want to take it quite that far. In the end, no matter how artistic, games are meant to be entertaining. However, a little diversity would be nice. I'm sick of strapping white men in camos or women with big tits and a handy way with kung-fu. It's insulting, and it only caters to about half the population, isolating millions of potential gamers. As far as I can remember, there has never been a gay protagonist; black protagonists are virtually non-existent, and I can count the strong women whose best assets don't include cup size on one hand.

Bring on *GTA San Andreas*. It's a small step, but I really like where it's going.

MICHELLE STARR
Games Writer

loading...

CHARMIN'

LEMONY WHO, SIR?

It's just a series of unfortunate events



Watch out for Lemony Snicket come November!

Activision has been hard at work developing the game based on one of the biggest movies headed to cinemas this Christmas, *Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events*.

The movie is set to star young Australian actress Emily Browning (as orphan Violet Baudelaire), who plays opposite Jim Carrey. After a lengthy demonstration by Associate Producer Jay Gordon during Activate 2004, it was evidently clear that the

developers have, so far, been successful in replicating the charming and darkly romantic mood of the books and upcoming film.

The adventure will allow you to switch between the three Baudelaire children – Violet is the inventor, Klaus the intellect and baby Sunny has the ability to bite. Over 15 missions based on the movie and the first three books will be included and fans will be able to explore Count Olaf's mansion. **RY**

4 OR BOYZ

18+ READERS ONLY ZONE!

Step aside Spongebob Squarepants as developers go all Porkys



Larry is enjoying his life on PS2. A lot.

Uni students, teenagers going through puberty and anyone who likes babes and booze will be happy with the news that *Leisure Suit Larry: Magna Cum Laude* and *The Guy Game* are cumming very soon.

Leisure Suit Larry, which will be released October 21, sees the introduction of Larry Laffer's young nephew Larry Lovage. You'll control Larry as he goes from one bimbo to the next with the intention of going all the way. But you'll be the one who gets to decide if Larry gets any action by how well you score in the

mini-games. These can be anything from steering sperm to avoid objects that will make Larry humiliate himself to pressing the right button combos that will make him sound as smooth as Isaac Hayes.

Meanwhile *The Guy Game*, due out in early 2005, is a FMV trivia game that will have you answering questions in order to see some skin. Filmed in South Padre island during Spring Break, it'll also feature bonus mini-games that involve mud, alcohol and whipped cream.

We'll have more on both of these sizzlers, so prepare yourself. **PF**

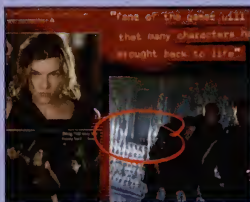
MORTAL KOMBAT DECEPTION



Introducing
3 new modes!



Chess Kombat



X-FILES WINNERS

Thanks for all the 'X-Files Giveaway' entries that flooded in for the competition in Issue #30. Most people correctly spotted him in the window of the *Resident Evil: Apocalypse* image on page 45 but a few people still thought they saw him on page 92 in the *Hitman* screen. Here are the lucky winners: D Leria (Vic), S McKay (NSW). Next month we'll have *Juiced* games.

BIGGER AND BETTER

Rumours about the PS3 have been flying around like fur in a catfight. However, Sony has confirmed that the discs for the PS3 will utilize a Blu-Ray format, which makes the current DVD system's capabilities look like Lego. The discs, which are read by a blue laser instead of a red, have up to five times the capacity of the current disc. Now that's seriously huge.



RELATIVE OBSCURITY

For all you survival-horror buffs out there, we have a new treat coming in the form of a game called *Obscure*, from Ubisoft. Based around several high schools (the surprising thing is that this hasn't really been done before), the game follows a group of five playable teenagers as they try to unravel a horrible mystery. The coolest thing? It's all played out in real time. Each one of the characters in the game can be played as either a human or a CPU player and your mates can drop into and out of the game without your game missing a beat. It's sounding like everything *Resident Evil: Outbreak* should have been. We'll have more soon.



PRO EVO SOCCER ONLINE!

Well, not quite. We love enthusiasm when it comes to games and no matter which game it may happen to be; it's encouraging to see that gamers all over our big, brown country are still making genuinely compelling connections with their games. One such group are some ardent *Pro Evolution Soccer* fans hailing from Melbourne who have been building an ever-growing community online. Their site www.ozphop.com/pes is alive and running and they're keen to hear from PES fans from around the country. The site is built to be a one-stop site for fans to start their own leagues and record all their results online. It's also a brilliant place to trade information and tips with fellow PES players.

BIG NOSE

TAK'S BACK!

Nickelodeon is Takkin' along

Remember Tak? The collaborative character between Nickelodeon and Avalanche? He's back, with an all-new adventure... quite interesting, considering we've seen neither hide nor hair of the cartoon.

It seems the untied boy of *Tak and the Power of Juju* has grown up, and *Tak and the Staff of Dreams* is going to reflect that. The gameplay is going to be a bit more linear, so there will be less running around and getting lost, and the enemies and story are a little darker and more mature.

Tak himself has undergone an image change. No longer quite the goofball, his adventures have made him more powerful.

There are additional enemies, and animals, the presence of a spirit guide (four to choose from). Oh, and we do hear the cartoon should be next year. **MS**



Tak's gameplay has been made more linear



SCI-FI GIVEAWAY

BEAM THIS UP WIN!

Win *Star Trek* boxsets!



Star Trek fans will score themselves enough entertainment to warp them through to 2005 with these awesome *Star Trek* DVD boxsets. We've got three boxsets of *Star Trek: Voyager* - Season Three and three boxsets of *Star Trek: The Original Series* to giveaway. It's enough DVD goodness to make a Vulcan cry. To enter the competition just write in, telling us which boxset you want and why you deserve to win in 10 words or less. And even if you don't win, you can still scoot down to your local DVD store and grab them when both boxsets are released on September 9. **NP**

HOW TO ENTER - Send entries to OPS2@derwenthoward.com.au with "Star Trek 2 Giveaway" in the subject line, enter on our website www.derwenthoward.com.au or send envelopes via snail mail to: OPS2 Magazine, PO Box 1037, Bondi Junction, NSW 1355. Email entrants are entitled to one email per competition. Entries should be clearly marked and include: The name of the competition, your name, age, email address, phone number (mobile also) and address. All competitions close 6 October, 2004. This comp is also open to NZ residents.

REJECTED CONCEPTS FOR GOLDENEYE 2

1. GOLDENEYE 2005

Largely the same as last year's *GoldenEye*, only with slightly better animations, an updated roster, a new Maximum Shoot Control™ feature and a fully licensed, hard rocking soundtrack!

2. THE SIMS: GLOBAL DOMINATION

Recruit an army of henchmen and hold entire countries at ransom, but don't forget to stay in touch with your neighbours and go to the bathroom - you don't want to make a mess on the floor of your underground lair.

3. GOLDENEYE UNDERGROUND

Fast cars and fast women - It's 100% pure Bond! Hang on, that sounds similar to *Need For Speed*. And you never see 007 and *NFS* in the same room, do you? Could they be one and the same? Of course not, one's a videogame and the other's a fictional spy. Idiot.

4. GOLDENEYE: THE WEDDING

007 and Natalya finally proclaim their love for one another and get hitched. Meanwhile Boris is as unlucky in love as ever, mainly because he was frozen by liquid nitrogen in the previous game. And frozen corpses just aren't hot, according to *Cosmopolitan* magazine.

5. GOLDENEYE: VOGUE AGENT

It's a clever take on *Rogue Agent*, get it? Fine - how about you try and run a magazine for a change? And it wouldn't hurt to take us out to dinner and tell us we're beautiful every once in a while either.

6. GOLDENEYES WIDE SHUT

And you thought *GTA* had a hard time at the OFLC...

7. ANYONE BUT ERIC BANA

Okay, so we know it was just a rumour - and this isn't really a *GoldenEye 2* concept, but can we just say how relieved we are? We're as patriotic as the next games mag, but Bana... come on!

8. GOLDENEYE VS PREDATOR

One's an alien; a hunter driven by primal urges. The other is a satellite, capable of causing damage to electrical equipment. No matter who wins, it's a dull fight.

9. GOLDENEYE: Q GOES NUTS

After one trashed modified sports car too many, Q finally snaps; insisting on developing all of Bond's gadgets out of potatoes and changing his name to 'Bill'.

10. GOLD3N3Y3

Probably best saved for the next game...



SCREENSHOT OF THE MONTH

Call of Duty: Finest Hour looks explosive!

Everything, including the buildings and areas are accurate and based on photos and research

Finest Hour will see you battle it out across the Eastern, North African and Western fronts

This rifle is just the tip of the iceberg. The game will feature over 30 real WWII weapons!

Something familiar about this shot? Maybe it's because 27 people from the MOH team made it!

OPEN 24 HOURS

24 HOURS TO WIN

Find Kiefer and win 24 DVDs!

Time to give your eyes another work-out. This month, 24's tough-as-nail counter terrorism agent Kiefer Sutherland (pictured right) has pulled a stakeout and hidden himself somewhere in the magazine. To celebrate the release of 24 - Season Three 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment has kindly provided us

with 15 DVD boxsets to giveaway. To be in the running to win one of these boxsets you just need to scan through the mag and find the other hidden picture of the Kiefer and let us know where he is (he'll be hidden somewhere else in the magazine). **NP**



WIN!


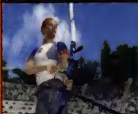
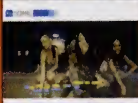
HOW TO ENTER - Send entries to OPS2@derwenthoward.com.au with "24 Giveaway" in the subject line, enter on our website www.derwenthoward.com.au or send envelopes via snail mail to: OPS2 Magazine, PO Box 1037, Bondi Junction, NSW 1355. Email entrants are entitled to one email per competition only. Entries should be clearly marked and include: The name of the competition, your name, age, email address, phone number (mobile also) and address. All competitions close 6 October, 2004. This comp is also open to NZ residents.

MORTAL KOMBAT
DECEPTION



Konquest
Adventure

PS2 TOP 10 GAMES CHART

- 1**  **NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND** after nearly a year of going strong in the charts has shifted back up to the number one spot thanks to the recent \$49.95 price drop. If you haven't played this game yet you really need to get into gear.
- 2**  **ATHENS 2004** shows that everyone's catching Olympics fever. Judging by the telecasts it looks like there are more people playing this game than actually turning up to the events in Athens. And that's no bad thing considering how much fun it is.
- 3**  **SINGSTAR** is proving that karaoke can be as fun as any PS2 game - especially when a few of your mates come around. Just don't let Richie talk you into letting him do his rendition of Dido. Trust us, it really is that bad.

RANK	TITLE	CATEGORY	DISTRIBUTOR
4	Medal of Honor: Rising Sun	Shooter	EA
5	Ratchet & Clank 2	Adventure	SCEA
6	Driv3r	Adventure	Atari
7	Spider-Man 2	Adventure	Activision
8	GTA Vice City	Adventure	Take 2
9	Shrek 2	Action	Activision
10	Formula One 04	Racing	SCEA

PS2 RELEASE SCHEDULE

SEPTEMBER

Burnout 3: Takedown	Racing	EA
Colin McRae Rally 2005	Racing	Atari
Conflict: Vietnam	Shooting	Atari
Crisis Zone	Shooter	SCEA
Demon Stone	Adventure	Atari
EyeToy Chat	Web cam	SCEA
Headhunter: Redemption	Action	Atari
Jackie Chan Adventures	Adventure	SCEA
Juiced	Racing	Acclaim
Karaoke Stage	Singing	Atari
Madden 2005	Sports	EA
NHL 2005	Sports	EA
Red Star	Shooter	Acclaim
Resident Evil: Outbreak	Survival horror	THQ
Shellshock: Nam '67	Shooter	Atari
Silent Hill 4	Horror	Atari
Star Wars Battlefront	Shooter	EA
Terminator 3: Redemption	Action	Atari
Tiger PGA Tour 2005	Sports	EA
V8 Supercars 2	Racing	Atari

OCTOBER

100 Bullets	Shooter	Acclaim
Def Jam 2	Fighting	EA
FIFA 2005	Sports	EA
Killzone	Shooter	SCEA
Mortal Kombat: Deception	Fighting	Red Ant
NBA Live 2005	Sports	EA
Sly 2: Band of Thieves	Adventure	SCEA
This Is Soccer 2005	Sports	SCEA
Ty The Tasmanian Tiger 2	Action	EA
Lord of the Rings: The Third Age	RPG	EA

NOVEMBER

Goldeneye: Rogue Agent	Shooter	EA
Grand Theft Auto San Andreas	Adventure	Take 2
Jak 3	Adventure	SCEA
Midnight Club 3: DUB Edition	Racing	Take 2
Need for Speed Underground 2	Racing	EA
The Urbz: Sims in the City	Family sim	EA
Tony Hawk's Underground 2	Sports	Activision

DECEMBER

Gran Turismo 4	Racing	SCEA
Metal Gear Solid 3	Adventure	Atari
Starcraft: Ghost	Adventure	Vivendi



loading...

WEB SLINGAZ

AU.PLAYSTATION.COM RELOADED

Official PlayStation site gets Ricki Lake makeover

When we're not busy playing PS2, we're logging on to Playstation's Official Aussie site. So imagine our surprise when we were greeted by an intuitive new design! au.playstation.com has been given a spit and polish, and the result is a look that is more easy on the eyes than Jessica Simpson. There's also faster video downloads, a comprehensive Customer Support section and a new Fun, Anyone? section packed with all kinds of downloadable screen savers, games and assorted other goodies. Add this to the News, Forums, Network Gaming and Comps and you've got a top PS2 source (besides OPS2 of course!). **KB KW**



FORCEFUL

BRING ON MORE STAR WARS

But hold the midichlorians, please!

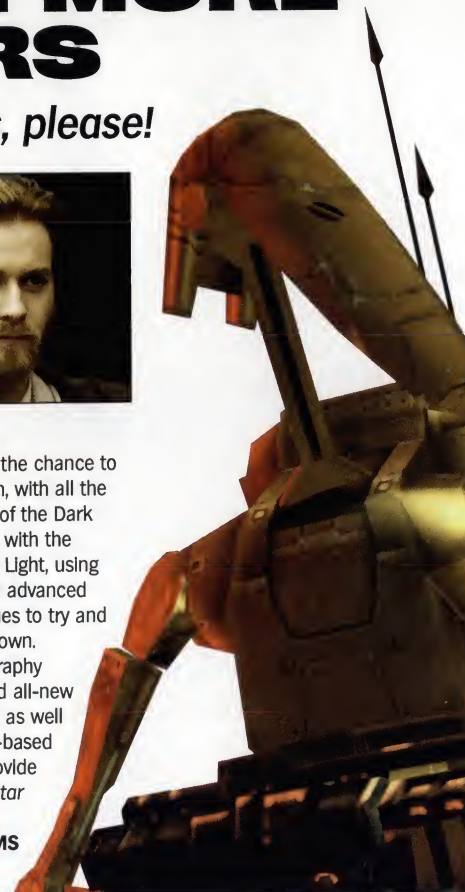


Anyone holding onto the edge of their seats for the release of *Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith* will be hitting our stores in the form of a shiny new PS2 title.

Playing as a third-person Jedi adventure, the game will document the monumental battle between good and evil as Obi-Wan Kenobi and Anakin Skywalker finally come head-to-head in an epic fight for the

galaxy far, far away.

Players will get the chance to control both Anakin, with all the devastating power of the Dark Side, and Obi-Wan, with the righteous power of Light, using both the Force and advanced lightsabre techniques to try and bring each other down. With both choreography from the movie and all-new fight choreography, as well as new and movie-based locations, it will provide material that the *Star Wars* fan can't get anywhere else. **MS**



GfK

New Entry
Non-Mover
Up from last week
Down from last week

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SEX APPEAL

THE TEA PARTY IS OVER!

Red Ninja stabs Tenu in the back!



PS2 owners will soon be treated to another third-person ninja quest starring a very deadly (and saucy) femme fatale. *Red Ninja: End of Honor* is similar in theme to the recent Cruise film, *The Last Samurai*, as it revolves around the emergence of the Gatling Gun in samurai-occupied Japan.

When a noble village leader declares the weapon dishonourable and orders it destroyed, mysterious ninjas assassinate him and make off with the gun's schematics. His daughter, Kurenai, is also taken and hung from a tree with a Tetsugen —

a bizarre wire weapon. But she miraculously survives.

Sneaking and fighting through the game's authentic oriental levels, players will not only be able to engage in melee combat with the Tetsugen, but also spear the weapon into foes and turn it into a hovering laser wire, able to slice scores of other enemies up like french fries. Also available will be Kurenai's innovative seduction move: here she shows a bit of leg, lures a grunt around a corner, then takes his head off! We'll have more on this slick ninja adventure as it becomes available. **JE**

MECHANICAL

ROBOTS ATTACK

And there's no Will Smith!



Media monolith Fox Studios was obviously surprised at the success of their last big animated film, *Ice Age*, as hardly a penny went into developing spin-offs or merchandise. It's obvious the entertainment juggernaut is keen to make amends, as their next big animated feature, *Robots*, is having a PlayStation2 videogame being developed in parallel with the movie.

A 3D platformer in the vein of *Jak II*, *Robots* stars heroic robot Rodney as he tries to save his land from the lord of the oppressing Big World Industries — the fascist Ratchet (no relation to Clank's buddy apparently)! Gamers can expect the usual puzzle solving and shooting action, as well as some monkey-ball inspired sequences where Rodney rolls down frenetic highways on his way to different parts of the game world.

Both film and game projects are set for a late February 2005 release. Check back for more robotic updates in coming months. **JE**

BEAT 'EM UP

CAPCOM'S MONSTER FIGHTER

It's the ultimate 2D street fight!

Capcom, the king of 2D side-scrolling fighters, is coming back to the top with a new title.

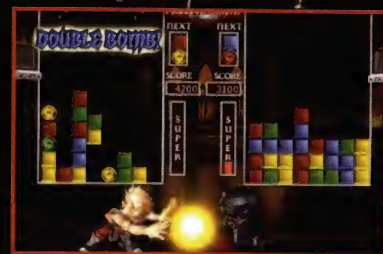
Capcom Fighting Jam will feature characters from five of Capcom's classic fighting games: *Streetfighter II*, *Streetfighter III*, *Streetfighter Alpha*, *Darkstalkers* and *Red Earth* (don't worry, we hadn't heard of this game either).

The characters will retain their own distinctive fighting styles, and there will be hidden characters to unlock. We've yet to see if these bonus characters will be from other games, though rumour has it that there might be a *Breath of Fire* character or two tucked away in there as well. Whatever happens you can expect plenty of hardcore 2D action. **MS**



It takes a lot of guile to beat this guy

MORTAL KOMBAT DECEPTION



Puzzle Kombat



PlayStation 2



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Feedback

We spend the whole magazine talking to you – now it's your turn!

SPEAK TO US!

Come on, we know you guys are bursting to get involved. Share your thoughts with the nation's PlayStation 2 owners in the new, improved Feedback section and you could win an exclusive Atari T-shirt and game! Write to us on paper or on a computer:

OPS2 Feedback
Derwent Howard
PO Box 1037
Bondi Junction, NSW 1355
Email: ops2@derwenthoward.com.au



OPS2 chart

Some games mags are written by people who don't really play games, but not OPS2 – we play games so much here that we hardly have time to make the mag! Here's what's been making us late this month.



1. GTA: SAN ANDREAS

It just keeps getting better and better, and we can't stop hopping in planes to go have another half-hour of play. Jetlag abounds.



2. BURNOUT 3

SMASH! BOOM! and ARGH! have echoed throughout OPS2 Towers as we lose all sense of camaraderie in the glorious beauty of fuelled explosions and nitro.



3. SOUL CALIBUR II

"You want more?" Bloody hell we want more! More swords! More button mashing! More Astaroth-slaying! More, dammit, more!



A SECOND OPINION!

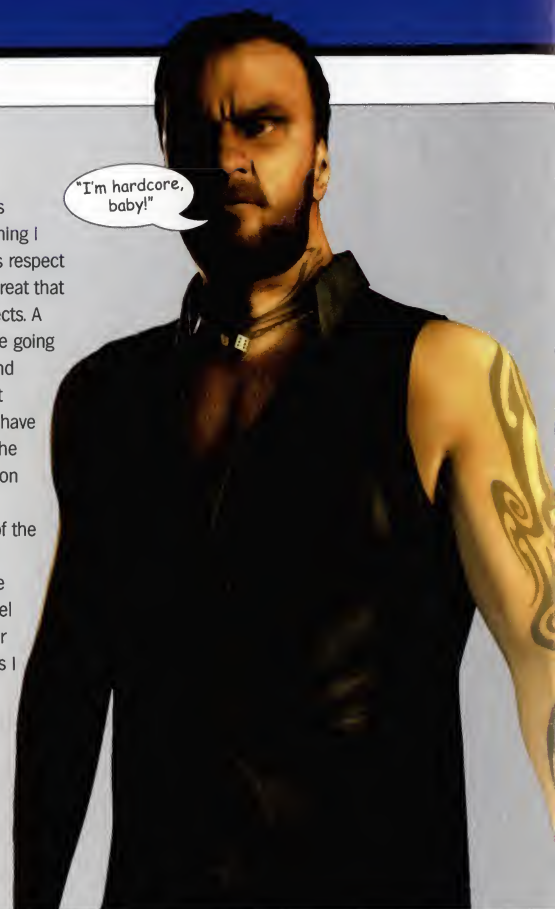
Great publication guys – good job.

I have a piece of sour news though – I think the hype on *Driv3r* is rubbish. I rented it recently, and I was most disappointed. The first thing I did on the main menu was "Take a Ride". Correct me if I'm wrong, but *Driv3r* in this respect has nothing to offer. Some annoying music and a few guns do nothing for me. It's great that you can roam freely, but it isn't even half as good as a game like *GTA* in those respects. A measly 10 guns? Is that it? You start with a house and a boat, for god's sake. If you're going to make a game like this than you need to be able to explore, find hidden things and unlock stuff. You can't even make money! Of course, it wouldn't fit with the story but would be great for this "live a life" type mode. The aim is fine – if a little annoying. I have to admit, I love the high-speed chase aspects, which is what you can expect from the *Driver* series. The replays are great fun, but I found myself going into the sound option menu to turn off the music almost every time.

Atari and the developers need to think more deeply about the exploring parts of the game. No blood or violence doesn't make it as fun, if you want my opinion. It's not satisfying wrecking havoc in *Driv3r*. All the cops say is "STOP" about 50 times before they open fire if you decide to knock over a pedestrian. It's really very annoying. I feel sorry for people who buy this expecting it to be their *GTA* killing spree – in case your not allowed to purchase MA15+ games like *GTA*! It's not a full blow-over though – as I said before, I love the driving missions and replay options.

Matthew Kahn, via email

Not every game is the same. Driver is not GTA, so you really shouldn't load up the game with that expectation in mind. That said, not every game caters to every taste. It's good to see you played the game and made up your own mind about it, rather than just going along with what everyone else says. OPS2 Magazine: supporting individuality!



FANTASY LAND

You should run a competition where the winner or winners get to work with you guys for a week or a day or something. It would be great. Fast food, 20 PS2s, the fabled room of broken consoles and controllers. and the greatest thing of all – your games library! I can see it now. An endless corridor. The best games of the lot being regularly cleaned and dusted, located at the front, all the way down to the crappy games often used as coasters. That would rule.

Simon Neely, via email

That certainly would rule. Unfortunately, we're under strict orders from the Grand High Poobah of PlayStation Gaming to keep our secret operation under tight wraps, lest we get attacked by little blue men who will steal all our gaming minutes and leave work minutes in their place.

VINDICATED!

I would like to say that I am in shock at the reviews of *Driv3r*. Just about every site on the net has given it about an average of 6 outta 10! I am amazed at this because I bought the game as soon as I knew it was out and personally I would give it at least 8.5. I know it's not everyone's type, but (and I know you'll agree) that doesn't mean that it has to get a lower mark just because of that. I breathed a sigh of relief when I saw that you guys gave it a 9. It certainly is well deserved – I knew I could trust the experts! Keep up the good work, you guys rock!

Alex Butler, via email

*Thanks for the vote of confidence, Alex! A lot of those scores were given to *Driv3r* on the basis of what the reviewers thought it should've been, given the hype. We based our score on what the game actually is, and we stand by that – and it's good to see that not everyone thinks we're a bunch of total loonies for telling it like it is.*

HUH?

I'm just wondering if Sony is making a PSX. I went on U.S. website and they had info on this PSX. They said it's out, but I haven't seen it yet. Is this true about a PSX? I believe this website because they had pictures of it as well. Can you write back to me and confirm this PSX and tell me when

it's coming out in Australia?

PS. Can you give me a price range for the new PSP?

George Maroulis, via email

The PSX is a combined games console, DVD recorder and digital video recorder. It has been out in Japan for about 6 months, but Sony has no plans to release it anywhere else until at least 2005. PS. It is unlikely the PSX will be released here, though we will have this confirmed!

IDEA TOWN

I have been playing the games from the *GTA* series and it has given me a great idea about a game. It's about a millionaire (who happens to be a child) that has run away from home because he wants to lead a normal life. So he buys a gadget which transforms him into an adult. Soon he starts to wish he was a kid again, so he has to travel all around Australia looking for someone who can change him back. In the game you could buy cars, houses, food, travel, and do all the stuff adults do. Anyway I'll get to the good parts. You could customize your own town/city and you could create the child you control, but best of all it is set in the future.

Joshua Allen, via email.

It sounds like a neat idea, story-wise, but it





cuttings

Little bits of leftover letters that we found on the floor

Strategy-head

Just writing to ask if you would publish some good "Warlike Strategy Games" like *Dune* or *Age of Empires*.
Daniel Peacock Jr., Rockhampton QLD

See, the way it works is, those are PC games. This is Official PlayStation 2 Magazine. You do the math.

Mmmm ... Pixels

I was wondering if you guys can do a cover story about *Playboy: The Mansion*. Please include the part that tells us if the game has nudity.
NAS, via email

Nudity, eh? Well, we COULD tell you ... but it's much more fun to keep you in suspense.

No idea

I've got a great idea for a game, and was wondering how I would go about submitting to Sony, or to you guys or something.
Adam Jacobson, via email.

We don't write games - we just write ABOUT them. Why don't you try contacting Sony, and see what they say?

Hello? Brains?

If you've ever played *Halo* on Xbox, you know it's a really good game. I'm not saying I'm an Xbox lover or anything. I just want to know if it would ever come out on PS2...
Billy Jo, via email

Halo is owned by Microsoft. Seriously. As in, it's theirs. Anyone else who asks this will have to write out, "Microsoft owns *Halo*" 1,000 times. With their nose.

ARGH!

Although I own a PS2, I thought about selling it for an Xbox, but after hearing rumors about *Halo 2* coming out on PS2, I reconsidered. Can you confirm the rumours?
Glen Richards, via email.

Right, that's it. Get writing, soldier.

might be lacking in the gameplay department. Try to remember that gaming isn't everything. Have you ever thought of becoming a novelist? We have a feeling you might make a pretty good one ...

NETWORK WOE

I have recently bought a PS2 network adaptor to connect to my broadband connection. I have connected the Ethernet cable to my router, plus all the other things. I have filled in the information that was on the disc, including all the DNS addresses. After all this, my PS2 still either fails to connect or craps itself every time I run a diagnostic test or attempt to access central station. It just come up with the old "A connection to the network could not be established" line. If you can offer any help to shed light on this situation, I would be very grateful.

Also, I was thinking of studying for a Journalism degree when I go to Uni, and eventually start writing for a great magazine such as yours. I was wondering what kinds of education you had to go through to get where you are now.

Cameron Findlay, via email

Sony has a helpline set up for this kind of problem. You can telephone Network Entertainment support on 1300 365 911 (Option 3) between 9:00am and 9:00pm (EST), Monday to Friday, and 11:00am to 9:00pm (EST) Saturday. You can also email them on NESupport@scee.net.

Two things count towards becoming a games journalist: you gotta be able to write, and you gotta love gaming. Though most of us ended up here through sheer force of character. We're just that hip, baby.

ESCAPED ESCAPISM?

Like everyone else, I'm going to start with the old 'You have the most wicked jobs in the universe and your mag has all the info you could ask for'. But to the point now, all games developers are being pressured to make their games 'realistic' instead of different and far away from reality. I find games like *Rumble Racing* where you can do impossible 720 degree diagonal spins in your car a well-earned break from everyday life. Sure, *Gran Turismo* is great but can't some games be more of an 'impossible experience'?

Tom, via email

You've raised a valid point, though it's unfair to say that all games developers are being pressured. Games are a form of escapism. Some games reflect that by

being as far from reality as possible (fancy a round of *Frolf*?). Some put you in a realistic-seeming situation where you can do things you normally couldn't. For some people, that makes the fantasy experience seem more real. There are plenty of both style of game out there. Try *Mashed*. *Mashed* will make it happen.

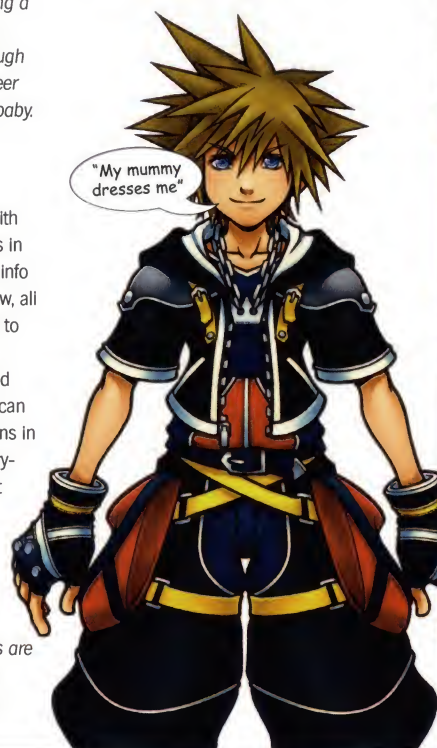
KINGDOM HEARTACHE

I'm a huge RPG fan and been playing them since forever and the only thing that gets me is that you can't go and revisit the game once you beaten the big ol' boss. Instead you start from scratch which is not fair coz you spent so many hours playing the damn thing. I think you should be able to finish off quests you didn't finish etc. Also I was wondering, if I subscribe, how is it all handled with the disc and all, because I collect them, so I like my mags in mint condition.

Cheers and keep up the good work.
Misel, via email

There are a few RPGs out there that let you go back after you've completed the game. They are few and far between, though. The trick is to do the stuff you want to do just BEFORE the boss fight.

There's a subscriptions page towards the end of the mag that details the how to and the wherefores. We'll mail your mag to you every month if you subscribe. Whether or not you do depends on how much you trust Australia Post.



READERS

most wanted

The votes for the Readers' Most Wanted chart have been flooding in, and we proudly present the first top 3 list of what the nation's PS2 gamers are most looking forward to playing. Don't forget to vote every month so that we can keep the list up-to-date and make sure we cover the games that you guys are dying to get your hands on.

Send an email to ops2@derwenthoward.com.au, with 'Most Wanted' as the subject, and list the top five upcoming PlayStation 2 games you're most looking forward to. Tell us why you're excited too, and we might print your rantings with your most anticipated title.



1. GTA SAN ANDREAS

"No explanation needed"
John Formosa, via email



2. KILLZONE (NEW ENTRY)

"Guns, guns and more guns ... all from the comfort of your own home. Does it get any better than that?"
Mark Blackman, via email



3. CONFLICT: VIETNAM (NEW ENTRY)

"The Desert Storm series was good fun, and I love the Vietnam war, what more could I ask for than a collaboration of the two."
b3nje boi, via email

pre-play

"When everything looks shiny!"
HANDS-ON

PLAYERS: 2 (AND ONLINE)
DISTRIBUTOR: ACTIVISION
DEVELOPER: NEVERSOFT
WEBSITE: WWW.NEVERSOFT.COM
LAST SEEN: OPS2#29
RELEASE DATE: EARLY 2005

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

65%

THUG 2 will no doubt bring in the bikies due to its impressive older brother, but chances are it'll deserve it.

TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND 2



SKATE-SIM

TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND 2

The Birdman grabs his lamp and hard-hat and goes deeper underground

BAM BAM

Why doesn't this dude have his own game?



Stepping into the limelight, Bam Margera will be bringing along his old man Phil, Jackass comrades Wee Man and Steve-O, and some kid in a wheelchair and body cast called Paulie. With some of the challenges having a distinctly Jackass and CKY feel to them, we suppose it was only natural to bring the master of mischief on board as one of the main characters. That said, we can't help but wonder what Tony Hawk's wife and two kids would think if Tony really took off on a round the world, balls-to-the-wall destruction tour with Bam and his crew. Hmmm...

It should come as no surprise that the punks at Neversoft are tightening the lug nuts on yet another instalment of their unbeatable skating franchise. For the same reason you don't see many pretenders try to take on *Gran Turismo*, the skateboarding genre on the trusty PS2 is more or less a wading pool that Neversoft can splash around in once a year. The sixth (that's right - sixth) incarnation of the series should be the best to date. And remembering the piss-poor PSone version of *THPS 3* was sired by Shaba, Neversoft haven't dropped a dud yet.

The original *THUG* was a drastic new direction for the *Tony Hawk* series, ditching the old formula in favour of a story that put you in the game. *THUG 2* takes everything that was great about its predecessor and throws even more into the pot, taking up where the original left off.

In the opening seconds of *THUG 2* you'll be kidnapped by a chainsaw wielding maniac in a blood-drenched hockey mask, along with other skating legends like Mike Vallety and Bob Burnquist. Fortunately, or perhaps unfortunately, you'll quickly discover the potentially murderous maniac is none other than skateboarding hero and lovable deviant Bam Margera.

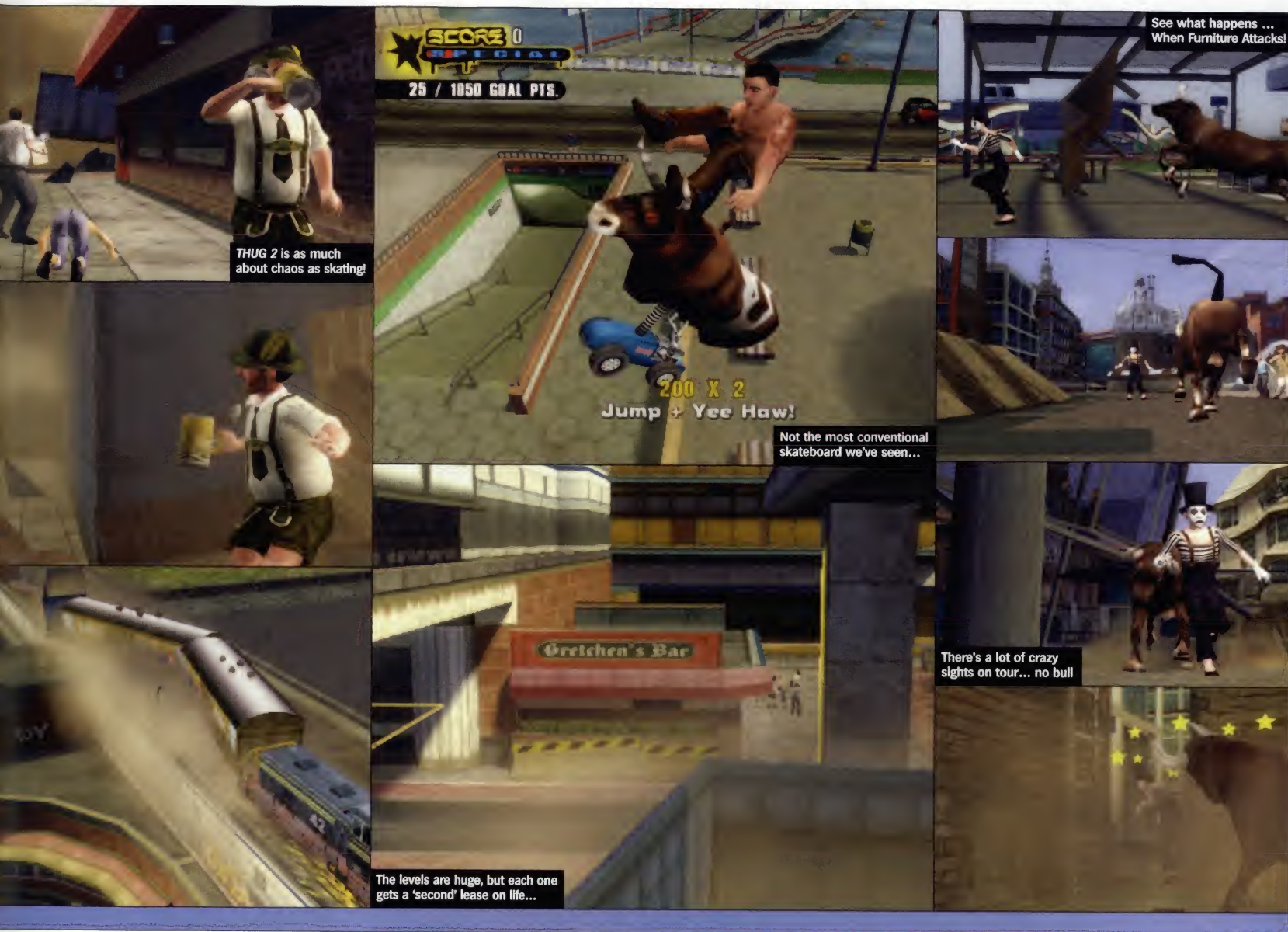
Bam has joined forces with the Birdman himself and

organised the first annual World Destruction Tour. In their words, "there'll be no cameras, no press and no crazed fans" and you'll join Team Hawk as you try to beat Team Margera at their own game, so to speak. Completing challenges, scoring big, petty vandalism and zany stunts will all net you points.

It looks like *THUG 2* is taking itself a little less seriously than past *Tony Hawk* games and the focus is now shared almost equally with Mr Barger. In the early version we saw Bam's dad Phil bound and gagged with a tire iron up his backside, rode around Barcelona as Steve-O on a mechanical bull and watched Bob Burnquist take a hit in the jatz crackers with a tennis ball and each levels changing drastically with a little destruction. All up, there's almost as much emphasis on causing havoc as there is on actual skating.

You won't have to wait as long this time around to skate as the pros either, as you'll be able to switch between members of your team in each of the huge levels. The pros will have their own strengths, but they'll also feature unique goals of their own as well.

For those who DO want to take their skating a little more seriously, you'll be happy to hear that *THUG 2* will essentially be two games in one. Harking back to the



earlier *Pro Skater* days, 'Classic' mode gives a two minute timer from levels from the first three *Hawk* games. Collect the letters, find the secret tape and score big; you know the drill.

And just when you thought they couldn't possibly think of anything new to add, Neversoft brings home the proverbial bacon, again. There'll be a number of new additions to the already staggering list of moves available. The sticker slap and graffiti tag, both of which are fully customisable, allow you to vandalise your surroundings to your heart's content. There's also a 'Freak Out' meter that can be used after a bail, so tap **A** enough times before you get up and you'll throw a hissy fit, hurling your board away or snapping it in half by jumping on it. You'll even be able to throw the odd projectile or two at pedestrians, something only previously explored in multiplayer *Hawk*.

Once again, the soundtrack will be stellar and currently features cuts from Faith No More to Frank Sinatra, Metallica to Johnny Cash, The Doors to The Living End and many, many more. *THUG 2* will also feature a bunch of special guests like motorcycle builder Jesse James, inventor Benjamin Franklin, Wee Man and around 20 others... **LR**

PAPA'S GOT A BRAND NEW TAG

Finally, a game where we can write rude words on the walls – just like back in Primary School!

What do manuals, spine transfers, reverts and getting off the board have in common? They've all been added to the *Tony Hawk* series over the years. There are new tricks here though (like Natas Kaupas' awesome fire hydrant spin) but the graffiti tag will be one of the latest and more unique additions to Tony's trick stable. Looking like less of a gimmick than we originally envisioned, the tag allows you to interact even more with your surroundings. And those worried you'll have to choose from a measly selection of generic-looking tags needn't fear; *THUG 2* will have an easy to use create-a-tag system that will allow the budding graphic designer in all of us to bust out in a haze of cheap spraypaint.

The other great thing is that the tags and sticker slaps will be able to be taken to the online environment. This means that you (and others) will be able to be instantly recognisable from the tags and stickers that you leave around. Just don't inhale...



HANDS-ON

PLAYERS: 1-4

DISTRIBUTOR: EA

DEVELOPER: EA LA

WEBSITE: WWW.EAGAMES.COM

LAST SEEN: OPS2#29

RELEASE DATE: NOVEMBER

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

70%

GE: ROGUE AGENT is a sequel to the N64 classic but EA hopes to create a better 'Bond' adventure - without a playable Bond!

GOLDENEYE

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION!



Remember the Fort Knox climax at the end of *Goldfinger*? How about the lair of Dr No? These were the great moments of the Bond films and EA have recognised these (and many more) scenes for *Rogue Agent*. All the things that made the films (and *Austin Powers* parodies) so great. Soon you'll be able to go back in time and experience these moments from the other side of the fence! This concept is brain-hurtingly cool and is set to give gamers entirely new perspectives to the Bond universe.

Bond prepares for a little grand theft auto



X ACTION / ADVENTURE

GOLDENEYE: ROGUE AGENT

"Bond... James... Bon - erm... actually that's not me. I'm a baddie this time! Woohoo!"

In the history of first-person shooter games one that constantly seems to crop up at the top of most gamers' 'most fondly remembered' lists is *GoldenEye* on the ye olde N64.

The fact that this title came out way back in 1997 and is still widely regarded as the best Bond tie-in around, so it says much for its quality.

Electronic Arts seek to better it, however, with its much belated sequel *GoldenEye: Rogue Agent*. Those expecting a straight follow on from the plot of *GoldenEye* will be surprised to learn that it's not a sequel in the traditional sense at all - you won't even play as Bond.

This time you are, as the title suggests, a rogue agent. You've been expelled from the British Agency MI6 and have taken up with some truly nasty fellows. The nastiest of the bunch...Goldfinger. Auric Goldfinger.

Yep, that's right. In a move that's bound to make 007-philes the world over swoon in geeky droves, this game has you taking orders from arguably the best Bond villain ever. But the changes don't stop there.

You might think that being a Bond villain you'd miss out on the gadgets and assorted joy. Not the case. In fact early in the game you're given a cybernetic eye that can repel bullets, knock enemies down and do a bunch of

other cool stuff that will be implemented in later levels as you earn new abilities. The payoff is, of course, that overusing your evil eye will exhaust your energy supplies but like they say, there's no rest for the wicked.

Rather than tie itself to one movie, *Rogue Agent* aligns itself with the Bond universe in a holistic sense. Example: The first level tracks your expulsion from MI6, which occurs in Fort Knox at the climax of the movie *Goldfinger*. The second level shoves you in the middle of a baddie battle royale 'twixt Goldfinger and Dr. No (this is where you're given the robotic peeper after losing one of your own fleshy orbs) and the third level sees you continuing on from there in Hong Kong. The rest of the game has been kept under wraps pretty well thus far but it has been confirmed that there will be a *Moonraker* level and other iconic movie moments captured for the final version.

So far *GoldenEye: Rogue Agent* is looking very sweet indeed. The smooth playability of the original is back along with bulk weapons, numerous destructible environments and enemy AI that will actually require you to think.

In the couple of levels we blasted through we found that even using our eyeball to fling enemies out of the

way, other henchmen of Doc No would bide their time and take us out when we least expected it. If the promise of this initial build continues throughout the rest of the game, this will be no simple run and gun fest.

The whole idea of tackling the entire James Bond oeuvre is sheer brilliance and the fact you're playing an evildoer when you do so is just the extra spice that makes it nice.

The single player game looks wonderful (and makes us wonder could the end boss be James Bond himself? However, we really can't see 007 dying!) but truly the jewel in the crown must be the multiplayer options. Adopt the role of a Bond character and fang around blasting your mates in a recognisable location, using gadgets and flying across zip lines from building to building. You can even set death traps with snares, gas, wires and blasts of flame.

If *Rogue Agent* even lives up to a fraction of its massive potential and the class that we have seen in the first few demos, it could well be the FPS that folks are remembering fondly for the next decade. The promise of a quality *Bond* game is nothing new, but we think EA are actually set to deliver. Certainly, it's left already left this games reviewer shaken and stirred! **AO**



You'll be blown away too
once you get inside Fort Knox



007 fans will recognise levels,
like this one from Moonraker



HEY, I KNOW THAT GUY!

Other Bond games have included famous Bond villains as part of the multiplayer experience but *Rogue Agent* actually weaves most of them into the single player story. For instance you'll be henching for the great Auric Goldfinger. Bond fans will remember this guy as the antagonist of the 1964 classic. He had a penchant for painting his enemies gold (so their skin would be unable to breathe and they'd suffocate) and had a grand plan to irradiate all the gold in Fort Knox.

In the second level you'll be looking for Dr No's henchmen. Naturally all does not go smoothly and soon you'll be fighting Dr No's lackeys on behalf of Goldfinger. Other characters will appear such as Oddjob, Scaramanga, Xenia Onatopp, Pussy Galore, and fingers crossed, Jaws. It's unclear at this stage if James Bond himself will appear in the game, and if he does in which incarnation, but either way the cast list is shaping up very nicely.



GOLDFINGER - Auric Goldfinger was played by the big and chubby actor Gert Frobe. By the end of his career, Gert had actually clocked up over 100 credits to his name - most of them from his native Germany. Gert died in 1988, at the age of 75.



DR NO - Despite inaccurate rumours, the character of Dr No was played by a Canadian - Joseph Wiseman. The character pre-dates *Goldfinger* and debuted in 1962. During his career, Wiseman acted opposite Marlon Brando and Kirk Douglas.

HANDS-ON

PLAYERS: 1
 DISTRIBUTOR: THQ
 DEVELOPER: INXILE
 WEBSITE:
[HTTP://WWW.INXILE-ENTERTAINMENT.COM](http://www.inxile-entertainment.com)
 LAST SEEN: #29 INFO NUJGE
 RELEASE DATE: OCTOBER

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

THE BARD'S TALE takes the RPG cliché, tips it upside down, shakes it very hard, and then collects the loose change.

BARD'S TALE

PLAY THAT FUNKY MUSIC



"Hack! Hack! Cough!
 Wheeze! Sorry – hairball."



Beer. Beer. Beer. Tiddly Beer.

It's all about the music. Occasionally, you will trigger a karaoke-style song by talking to the right person (which is then unlocked, to be enjoyed at your leisure as often as you like), but the whole party system is also founded on music. By playing a nice little tune on his lute, the Bard can summon creatures to his party. Initially, you can only summon a rat, but the further you progress through the game, you can summon more, and you'll be taught the tunes for each different creature – from spiders to warriors.

X RPG

THE BARD'S TALE

Cleavage and coin and a spoony, spoony bard.

When you stop to think about it, a bard is an unlikely hero for a world-saving adventure. He doesn't have the burly brawn of the warrior, the sinister mystique of the necromancer, or the fireball-hurling panache of the sorcerer babe. The bard is the one who goes around plinking out tunes on a lute and entertaining small children and fluffy animal friends.

Not this little black duck. InXile's Bard is a self-serving, self-aware, self-centred piece of work, scamming his way around the pubs of Skara Brae with his not-quite-so-fluffy little rat friend, a lute and a sword, in pursuit of the two most important things in the world – coin and cleavage.

Ah, novelty, how we love you. We've been having RPGs thrown at us from all directions lately, all following the same formulaic plot, with the same formulaic characters and moves and items, the developers all trying to outdo each other in terms of graphics, crazy items and breast size (men and women).

The Bard's Tale has all of that – the plot involving a "Chosen One" saving the world, a bee-yoo-tiful princess, item upgrades and boobies galore. What it also has is a protagonist who is fully aware of exactly how ridiculous

the whole scenario is, and has absolutely no interest whatsoever in saving a world that has, so far, worked for him just fine.

The self-ridicule is in subtle effect as soon as the title screen roles around, a melodic lay playing softly in the background. Not all gamers will discover the joke – that the music is a prettified version of an in-game Viking song about what a total bastard the Bard is – since it can only be heard on one of the "optional" quests that the developers put into the game for no reason other than plain, simple fun.

It's a concept the game brings to the fore at every opportunity. This is probably most evident when you start actually killing stuff, or dungeon trawling. The development team believe that scrounging around in dungeons for stuff to sell is boring. To make it a little more interesting, whenever you find an item, it is automatically upgraded to one better than what you currently have. And any items that are outdated or unnecessary are automatically converted into gold, without benefit of an intermediary. It means the game is sleeker, more streamlined, and you can spend more time actually playing rather than running back and forth from dungeons trying to offload your cargo on some poor,

unsuspecting shopkeeper.

The other interesting thing the game features is a good/evil non-linear storyline. Unlike other games, though, you can only choose from a nice or nasty icon at the top of the screen in response to the NPCs, without seeing in advance what the Bard is going to say by way of text options on the bottom of the screen. Not that it would do you much good, necessarily. Sometimes being narky pays off – for instance, when you get shirty with a buxom barmaid early in the game, she swoons and tells you how much she loves strong men.

The game is riddled with sneaky little secrets like this, to keep you trying anything and everything, and to always keep the element of surprise in place. It also means that there is no way you could possibly see everything on a single playthrough, and with three different endings to be attained, and many ways of playing the game through, there's no way you'd want to.

The Bard's Tale has achieved a nice balance of fun and challenging, coupled together with Cary Elwes' dry humour and a wry self-awareness that will keep you giggling like a maniac and singing the beer song for the entire 40 hours you'll spend playing it. If you don't, we'll eat our helmets. **A- MS**

The Bard – not to be confused with Brad

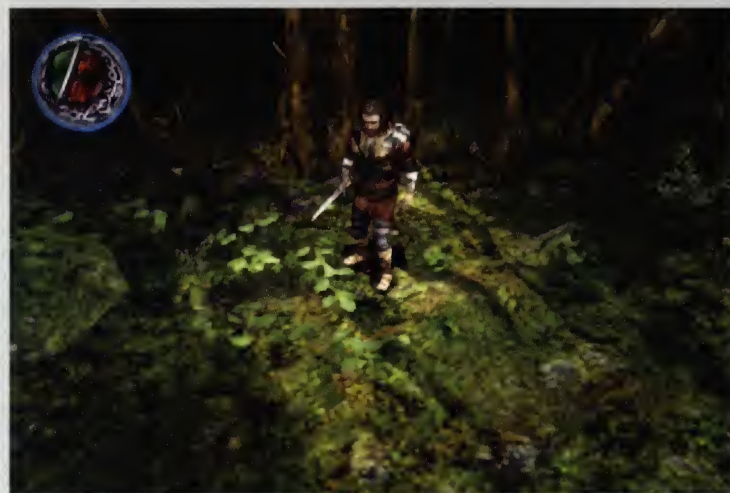




BONO VOX

There is so much cool stuff in this game, that it actually hurts. Probably just about as much as Cary Elwes' (*The Princess Bride*, *Robin Hood: Men in Tights*) voice box. According to our sources (Brian Fargo, inXile's CEO), there are over 30,000 lines of recorded dialogue in the game. Why so many? Funny you should ask.

The game is fully voice acted, and we mean, fully. Every person you speak to will reply with live dialogue, not just a box on the bottom of your screen. Given the nature of the story paths, this means there will be many lines and jokes (and songs) that you might not hear, but it makes for a much more in-depth experience.



HANDS-ON

PLAYERS: 1
 DISTRIBUTOR: CAPCOM
 DEVELOPER: CAPCOM
 WEBSITE: WWW.CAPCOM.COM/V-JOE
 LAST SEEN: FIRST LOOK
 RELEASE DATE: OCTOBER

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

VIEWTIFUL JOE is gonna be big. Not just because he can get big, but because... hell, it's just gonna be good!



X PLATFORMER

VIEWTIFUL JOE

Ah, what a viewtiful moorning...

At last – at long, long last – the much-hyped *Viewtiful Joe* is coming to the PS2. It might just be time for a few “hip-hip-hurrahs”. On the other hand, it might not, either. It may have been a big deal for the poor, neglected Cube, but we’re not entirely convinced the game can stand up to our rather more exacting standards.

It tells the story of Joe, vintage movie buff (and a bit of a jerk). One evening, he takes his girlfriend Silvia to catch one of his favourite nostalgia flicks. While the couple are happily pashin’, the villain of the film reaches out of the screen and kidnaps Silvia for his own nefarious purposes. Joe follows in order to save his damsel in distress. At first, it seems as if Joe could not possibly be any kind of a match for the movie villains... but then he meets his hero, Captain Blue, who gives him the power to turn into the ultimate movie super hero – Viewtiful Joe!

While other platformers are keeping up with the times with fully interactive 3D gaming, *Viewtiful Joe* harks back to the days of classic 16-bit action platformers. In essence, it is nothing so much as a 2D side-scroller which turns the occasional corner in order to give the illusion of depth. Even the graphics are two-dimensional – albeit masterfully done, using all of Capcom’s considerable skill with cel-shading. This apparent incongruity – the juxtaposition of modern graphics techniques with seemingly outdated gameplay style – nevertheless blends together to create a nostalgic, yet brand-spanking-new, experience.

Now, we’re all fans of the side-scrolling beat ‘em ups. But it’ll be the inclusion of Joe’s super V-Powers that will convince you that this game is definitely smarter than the average bear. Following the cheesy movie-theme, Joe can tap into three special powers that give him the edge over the baddies. The first – and the one you start the game with – is called Slow Down. It... er... slows down your enemies, so that you can zip around like a speedy thing and dispatch their arses before they can blink.

The second, Mach Speed, speeds Joe up while the enemies stay the same speed, so you can zip around like a speedy thing and dispatch their arses before they can blink. They might sound the same, but there are a whole range of different combos and advantages with each power. The third is Zoom In. It makes Joe bigger.

And if you use it in conjunction with the other powers, you’ve got a whole lot of crazy fun kung-fu action goin’ on.

So, does *Viewtiful Joe* hold up? Well, a quality game is a quality game, and while this isn’t the best thing we’ve seen ever, it’s certainly worth a look. Boo-yah. **MS**

Is this a game or is someone just fantasising?

“Umm... I think you’re in the wrong game!”

Joe’s superpowers will set this game apart

JOE’S INFERNO

So, what’s different? Well, as a special treat for PS2 gamers, Capcom has included an additional character – *Devil May Cry*’s very own Dante! You’ll have to play through the game once to have access to the man in red, but we’ve had a play, and he’s pretty worthy. He can use both his guns and his sword, and he packs a bit more of a punch than Joe, and you’ll be able to purchase move-based upgrades for him in the shop. He also seems to have been hanging out with Austin Powers, and the result is a little... bizarre. “*Devil May Cry* baby. Yeah!”

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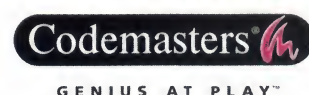
PlayStation.2



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HANDS-ON

PLAYERS: 1-2 (2-16 ONLINE)

DISTRIBUTOR: EA

DEVELOPER: PANDEMIC

WEBSITE: WWW.STARWARSBATTLEFRONT.COM

LAST SEEN: OPS2#29

RELEASE DATE: SEPTEMBER

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

STAR WARS: BATTLEFRONT is Battlefield 1942 with Ewoks and X-Wings – plus a solid single-player game.

STAR WARS
BATTLEFRONT

X ACTION

STAR WARS:
BATTLEFRONT

Ewoks plus headshots equals plenty of family fun...



That's right. You can jump in that AT-ST!

Make roadkill out of the ewoks with speeder bikes



Thankfully pod racers play no part in this game

PLAYING HAN SOLO

Even if you're not online, *Battlefront* is still looking like a must for both *Star Wars* geeks and general action fans alike. Not only is there a graphically smooth split-screen two-player mode for both co-operative and head-to-head scraps, but also a Campaign mode that follows the battles of the films in sequence, linking them via footage from the movies. And the icing on the cake is the Galactic Conquest mode; that allows you to choose one of the four factions and slowly take over the galaxy one planet at a time, from Naboo to the throat-clearing Kashyyyk. Expect plenty of unlockable content such as extra gameplay modes and production materials too.



We know that the George Lucas devotees among you have already got your lightsabres humming over this one, but fear not those of you who don't know your armpit from a Sarlac pit; all you need to bring are your reflexes because *Star Wars: Battlefront* is all about fast and furious full-scale battles in the *Star Wars* universe – no nerdy knowledge required (sorry nerds).

Battlefront is all-encompassing. While previous *Star Wars* titles have focused on particular chapters of Lucas' money making series, *Battlefront* allows you to fight on pretty much every planet and in every era of the five (soon to be six) films. The classic confrontation on the ice planet Hoth from *The Empire Strikes Back*? It's in there. Crunching AT-ST walkers with swinging-log booby traps on the forest planet Endor from *The Return of the Jedi*? But of course.

The skirmishes in *Battlefront* really feel epic in scale, and though you're limited to 16 human players in the online mode, there's plenty of AI-controlled bots that make up the numbers for your chosen faction, be it Imperial, Rebel, Separatist or Republic Clone Army (and occasionally pesky neutral parties such as the Sand people on Tatooine or the sickeningly cute Ewoks). The maps on offer are roomier than Jabba the Hut's sleeping bag and are generally packed with winding bunker tunnels, elevated sniping points, mounted gun turrets and vehicles aplenty.

Did someone say vehicles? Speeder-bikes, Tie Fighters, Snowspeeders and AT-ST walkers are just a taste of what you'll find littering the maps. Often the vehicles can be ridden by multiple players at once; such as the floating Sail Barges on Tatooine that feature several gun turrets, allowing you to concentrate on your driving while your buddies dish out the punishment.

Players can choose from a number of different soldier classes in each faction, from snipers to grunt soldiers, and must seek victory in the conflicts by either taking possession of all spawn points on the map at once, or by wiping out the entire opposing army (usually comprised of around 200 troops). Secondary goals such as defending shield generators or bringing down the monolithic AT-ATs with your tow cable are also integral parts of the battles.

Throw in some cameo appearances by some of the series' most identifiable characters (at one point during our hands-on with the game Darth Vader popped in to cut a swathe through the futile Rebels) and you've got the definitive *Star Wars* action title; blasters, spaceships and none of that cheesy mythology nonsense. **TO**

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PlayStation 2



PlayStation®2 Online play requires Internet connection and Network Adaptor for PlayStation 2 (sold separately). Xbox Live™ requires broadband Internet service, connection via Ethernet cable (not included) and Xbox starter package (sold separately).
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EG462

HANDS-ON

PLAYERS: 1
 DISTRIBUTOR: TAKE 2 INTERACTIVE
 DEVELOPER: COYOTE
 WEBSITE: WWW.VIETCONG-GAME.COM
 LAST SEEN: FIRST LOOK
 RELEASE DATE: SEPTEMBER

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

76%

VIETCONG: PURPLE HAZE is looking promising and could well prove to be the *MOH: Frontline* of the Vietnam era.

VIETCONG



There's a real threat of mines and tripwires



Expect weaponry that's authentic to the era



There could be a Hendrix song in this...



You can assign tasks to the squad or individuals

ACTION

VIETCONG: PURPLE HAZE

Not in any way related to King Kong

The setting of the Vietnam War is ideal for videogames. After all, what's not to like about a tropical paradise, exotic people and the smell of napalm in the morning? Guerrilla warfare is always grand fun too; with the sweaty hands and tense, short breaths giving way to instinct and reflexes once the gunfire showdowns begin. It is this horrific atmosphere that developers Coyote are doing their utmost to recreate in their upcoming *Vietcong: Purple Haze*, and if early impressions are anything to go by, it's something they will achieve admirably.

Vietcong is a squad-based FPS where you, as squad leader, have direct control over three other soldiers, each with different (and vital) skills. Naturally, like all good commanders there are a variety of orders you can assign to your soldiers. With the press of a button, you can split up or reform them back into a tight group. To aid positioning and strategy, you can tell the others to follow you or hold their position. Finally, it is also possible to assign orders to individual members rather than the whole team, should that be strategically required.

As one would expect from a game about guerrilla war, the enemy is very adept in hiding in the lush scenery, and if they don't ambush and annihilate the team first, there's a very real chance that the tripwires or mines will. This is where *Vietcong* already excels. There is a real and palpable tension that comes from hearing nothing but the birds chirping high in the trees, and seeing nothing but unmoving, thick vegetation on the ground. Then, suddenly, said foliage seems to explode into action, and boy, when that happens, you had better hope you're well protected by trees and the like! This game will test the nerves of the hardest of wargame veterans, and it is this ability to create paranoia that is the game's biggest drawback.

Other than the squad-based commands, the game may end playing like a relatively conventional FPS. Objectives are clearly defined, and arrayed in a relatively neat pattern throughout the level; nothing special here, and the game does run at a very slow pace, testing player's patience and strategy rather than trigger coordination. This would make the game potentially boring, but the end result will be anything but dull if the incredible atmosphere and tension can remain at the levels it begins with throughout the whole game. **B MS**



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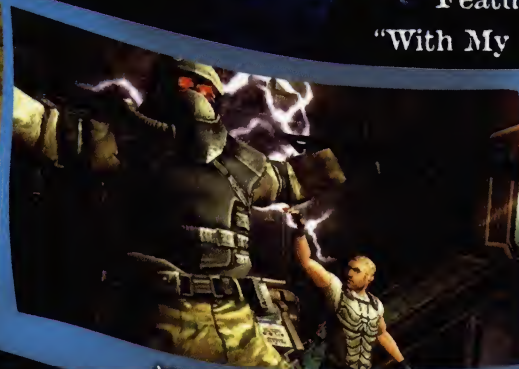
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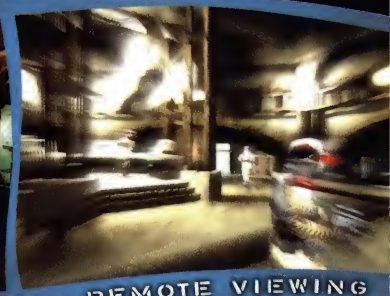
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PlayStation 2

MIDWAY



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HANDS-ON

PLAYERS: 1-2

DISTRIBUTOR: VIVENDI

DEVELOPER: GENUINE GAMES

WEBSITE: WWW.FIGHTCLUBGAME.COM

LAST SEEN: FIRST LOOK

RELEASE DATE: NOVEMBER

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

60%

FIGHT CLUB lets you unwind after a hard day's work by slogging it out with a mate. Expect plenty of blood-splattering.

FIGHT CLUB



Even the OPS2 team needs to let off steam after deadline

Nope, that ISN'T Wolverine making a cameo!



Different areas will open up during "dust ups"



X BEAT 'EM UP

FIGHT CLUB

The final rule of *Fight Club* is: do not make *Fight Club* merchandise

Corporations, fashion, body image, and other useless preoccupations were branded with a beaming target in the 1999 cult film sensation, *Fight Club*. The film's message was: if you don't need it, destroy it. It's a little more than ironic then, when a large massive company capitalises on the notoriety of such a film to make a spin-off videogame set to steal precious hours away from important tasks like growing one's own crops or breeding livestock to later skin and devour. Perhaps Twentieth Century Fox didn't really buy *Fight Club*?

To be blunt, a videogame based on *Fight Club* initially smelt like mad marketing. Certainly there was some cynicism around here concerning how well it would turn out. But there's good news. After going a few rounds with an early build of the game we've come back with a couple of shiners under the eyes, a few missing molars, a mouthful of our own blood – but still thirsty for more. Feeling like a cross between the speedy *Dead or Alive 2* and the pure *Ultimate Fighting Championship* games, *Fight Club* is training up to be a decent brawler packed with manly spit and grunt.

Breaking it down, it's a one-on-one fighter set amongst backdrops from the film. Characters from the

film, like Tyler and Jack (though there's no sign of either Brad Pitt or Ed Norton), slog the marrow out of each other with combinations of kicks and punches 'til one collapses and leaves the other victorious. We know, we know – the premise is hardly as startling as a brick to the balls, but it's not without a few innovative features worth a gander.

The most obvious of which is the ability to break opponent's limbs during critical points in each round. You'll know when they're ripe for some bone snapping when an icon pops up near their life bar. Perform a throw at this point to shift the game into x-ray slow-mo view and get a front-row seat to see a limb or vertebrae get cracked. If you're successful in say, breaking your opponent's arm, he won't be able to use it for the rest of the match.

Like *Dead or Alive*, you can also throw your enemy into new areas in a few of the game's stages. You might start a blue outside, but crash tackle your fighting buddy through a bar window before going on with it in front of the local bar wench.

Fight Club is looking like a surprisingly decent fighter at this stage of development. Keep watching this space to find out more info as it becomes available. **JE**

THE THIRD RULE OF FIGHT CLUB

Set to support online bashing using the broadband adapter, it's here that the third rule of *Fight Club* will become of paramount importance. When competing online you'll be able to build up your character's skills and combos by winning bouts against other players. During an online fight, if you think you're going to lose, you can tap out, accept the loss, and fight on with your character another day. If you don't tap out and lose, all the stats and abilities you have are taken from you. This should ensure there are some nail-biting finishes as two highly-rated players both find themselves at death's door – who'll tap out first? Sounds like a very suave videogame version of "chicken". We like it!



DESIGNER GORETURE

BY CAPCOM

"Quite simply you haven't seen a Resident Evil game look this good before." PSW Magazine

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HANDS-ON

PLAYERS: 1-2
 DISTRIBUTOR: UBISOFT
 DEVELOPER: VENOM GAMES
 WEBSITE: WWW.UBL.COM/US/GAMES
 LAST SEEN: OPS2#31
 RELEASE DATE: OCTOBER

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

60%

ROCKY LEGENDS is set to reclaim its PS2 title belt by tightening its previous setup and adding some knockout new features.

ROCKY

What ever happened to Dolph Lundgren (aka Drago) anyway?



Don't ever criticise The A-Team in front of Mr T

The last known survivor stalks his prey in the night



X BEAT 'EM UP

ROCKY LEGENDS

You can't keep a good fighter down

If you're still having difficulties with *Fight Night's* innovative Total Punch Control System, then you'll be happy to know that the Italian Stallion and Ubisoft are lacing up the gloves once again for another button bashing boxer that's hoping to float like a butterfly and sting like a bee.

Rocky Legends knows it was the greatest boxer before *Fight Night* hit the ring, so it's not making any major changes to its gameplay. X and O have once again been assigned to look after body shots, while A and @ will help you knock out some teeth with the head-high punches. The gory damage effects have been taken up a notch so that you'll be able to see the teeth flying after particularly heavy hits this time around.

To avoid getting smacked up too much and looking like Mike Tyson, you'll need to hold B and B while moving the left analogue stick. Holding down one of these buttons while pressing the punch buttons allows you to knock the head off any of the 20 plus fighters with a big blow.

Once again, the cast from the movies are back but unlike the last game, you are now able to choose them as playable characters. The best thing is you can either opt for a spot of revenge and annihilate Rocky's greatest

rivals, or you can pick them and have them fight through the revamped career mode.

Whether it's Apollo Creed or the Italian Stallion himself, you'll need to prove yourself in the ring. Starting off with local nobodies, you'll eventually fight your way up and get yourself a professional ranking. Not all your fights will be in Vegas style arenas either. When starting at the bottom you'll fight in some of the roughest locales this side of The Block. Some will be on the streets with beer kegs as posts, while others will be at mess halls in prison with guards taking bets. But as you move up the ranks you'll notice both the arenas, and the prize money, improving. However, to get to the big time you'll need to do some serious training. Your training regimes play similarly to the events seen in *Athens 2004*. Some will require you to mash buttons like a maniac while others will only require you to hit the appropriate buttons at the right time. The better you do in these training exercises the stronger each of your boxing attributes become.

Anyone who's enough of a fan of boxing or *Rocky* that they have Eye Of The Tiger as a ring tone should keep a close eye on *Rocky Legends*. Next to appearing in *The Contender* this will be their best opportunity yet to become a part of the *Rocky* legacy! **PF**

CAST REUNION

Unlike the previous *Rocky* title, *Legends* will allow you to play through the career mode as some of the Italian Stallion's greatest rivals.



APOLLO CREED

Films: *Rocky I and II*

Best quote: "I can beat you anytime, anywhere."



CLUBBER LANG

Films: *Rocky III*

Best quote: "If you want to wake up to a real champ, come over to my place."



IVAN DRAGO

Films: *Rocky IV*

Best quote: "If he dies, he dies."

A large, stylized image of Captain Kirk (William Shatner) in a blue Starfleet uniform, framed by a large, dark, triangular shape that resembles a Starship's hull. He is holding up his right hand in a Vulcan salute. A bright light source is visible behind him, creating a lens flare effect.

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HANDS-ON

PLAYERS: 1
DISTRIBUTOR: ATARI
DEVELOPER: STORMFRONT
WEBSITE: WWW.ATARI.COM/DEMONSTONE
LAST SEEN: OPS2#31
RELEASE DATE: SEPTEMBER

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

DEMON STONE takes action-adventure, mixes in a little RPG and fantasy, and then serves it all up on a gold platter.



Zhai's special ability is jumping. Like a frog!

Illius has some pretty impressive skills



"I told him that was a shocking haircut!"

X ACTION ADVENTURE

DEMON STONE

Everybody must get stoned. Demonically.

UPGRADES AHOY!

As you would expect of a *Dungeons & Dragons* title, you earn experience points, which raises the level of your character, and gold, which you can use to upgrade your equipment at the end of each chapter. The amount of stuff you can get is phenomenal – you'll be able to upgrade armour, weapons, and your combat moves – meaning you can purchase combos to make you an even deadlier orc-buster. The Autobuy feature automatically spends your gold evenly and on the most logical upgrades. Huzzah!

You're sneaking through the shadows, your prey standing nonchalantly with his back turned to you. With a leap, you land on his shoulders and plunge your knives into his brain before somersaulting down and landing with a self-satisfied little wiggle.

Actually, Zhai, the half-Drow rogue, one of the three playable characters in *Demon Stone*, doesn't wiggle as such; she just looks kind of wiggly. And lithe. But if you can tear your eyes away from her svelte little booty for five minutes, you'll find yourself staring in a thoroughly solid adventure from the accomplished team at Stormfront.

The story takes place in the battle-torn land of Faerun. Factions of orcs are fighting over who gets pillage-rights and there are two evil leaders – a Slaad lord and a Githyanki lady, who are both vying for the control of Faerun.

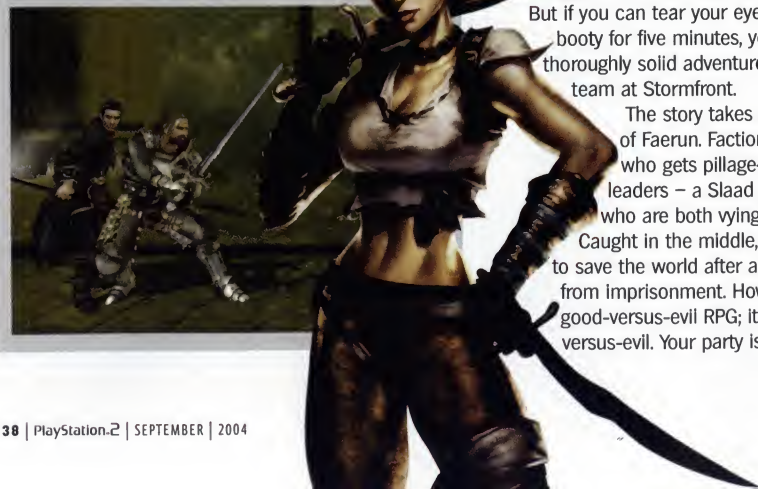
Caught in the middle, your heroic party must fight to save the world after accidentally freeing the pair from imprisonment. However, this isn't the classic good-versus-evil RPG; it's more good-versus-evil-versus-evil. Your party isn't the main focus of the evil

factions; they're more interested in each other, and you're just a minor irritant as you seek to thwart their diabolical plans.

Anyone who has played *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers* will recognise the engine basics, all tweaked and jazzed up to the eyeballs. Add to this the big names involved – writer R. A. Salvatore and the vocal talents of Patrick Stewart and *The Green Mile*'s Michael Clarke Duncan – and you've got one pret-ty tidy parcel.

One of the best things is the way you'll be able to switch between characters on the fly – between melee master Rannek (the fighter), lord of the long-range Illius (the sorcerer) and the aforementioned swami of sneak, Zhai (rogue). Whatever the situation, you'll be able to pick your party member for their abilities. Of the three, Zhai was our favourite, from her sharp little tongue to her acrobatic tumblers. And being able to sneak around invisible always beats fireballs or a sword!

This looks likely to be one of the better action-adventure titles of 2004. With an engaging story by a master writer, fully fleshed-out characters and non-stop action, we think only a co-op mode could make it much better... **MS**





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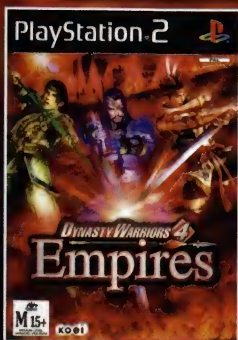
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PlayStation®2





The dirt bike is just one of the new vehicles

Size matters

San Andreas is not just bigger than any previous GTA game, it's the biggest and boldest videogame ever made!

WORDS: NARAYAN PATTISON

LA Story

As you're probably aware, *San Andreas*' first city, Los Santos, is a stylised recreation of California's Los Angeles. Although the names have changed, you'll still be able to pick out a number of familiar sights.



DOC G RECORDS

Standing tall above the streets of Downtown Los Santos, Doc G Records is inspired by LA's famous Capitol Records building. We wouldn't be surprised if the game has some missions involving crooked music execs too.



THE GROVE

This little cul-de-sac is CJ's base of operations at the start of *San Andreas*. It's where he grew up with his mother and brother and it's the home turf of his gang, the Orange Grove Families. Expect CJ to move on to swankier places later though.

Rockstar is planning to have more than 50% of the buildings enterable



This porky version of CJ runs out of puff easily




OPS2 was lucky enough to wing over to San Francisco last month for an amazing preview of the game that everyone's talking about, *Grand Theft Auto San Andreas*. We saw a tonne of jaw dropping new gameplay elements and we asked a tonne of questions. But no matter how much we saw and how much we asked, we still came away with one burning question: how did they do it? How did Rockstar find the time to cram so much gameplay in. Even though we've only seen about 40% of the game, it already seems like the sort of accomplishment that would have taken a decade to create.


You've probably already heard that where *GTA3* and *GTA Vice City* had single cities as playgrounds, *San Andreas* offers up an entire state (based loosely on California) with stylised versions of LA, San Francisco, Las Vegas and all the countryside in between. You might also be thinking that you beat *True Crime*'s city in six hours and you beat *Driv3r*'s three cities in 10 hours, so *San Andreas* couldn't take much more than 15 hours to beat? This sort of thinking couldn't be

Swimming with the fishes



Few things in *Vice City* were as frustrating as falling a mission because you missed a jump when boarding a boat and drowned. Rockstar could have just whacked an easy bandaid on the problem by putting swimming in but having it do nothing more than stop you from drowning. Rockstar has this crazy notion that gameplay should be fun though, so rather than just fix the drowning it has made swimming an essential and interesting part of *San Andreas*.

Push the analogue stick in any direction and CJ will swim using breaststroke. This isn't a fast stroke but it does have the advantage of not tiring out CJ. By holding  you can step up the pace and switch to freestyle swimming but you can't go far before CJ runs out of puff.

Things get really cool when you press  because CJ will dive below the surface. Naturally you have to keep an eye on CJ's oxygen level when doing this but it opens up all sorts of possibilities for exploring *San Andreas* to greater depths. Don't think that just jumping in the water and splashing about will be enough to lose any enemies chasing you. *San Andreas*' other citizens can also swim and won't hesitate to chase you into the water.

The feature that's got us the wettest though, has to be the grand theft aqua. CJ can grab boats as they pass by, drag himself on board and then 'persuade' the boat's captain to hand over the keys.



further from the truth though. While *True Crime* and *Driv3r* had about half the real estate *San Andreas* has, they'd be lucky to have five per cent of its gameplay. It all comes down to how much gameplay gets crammed into every square metre of the game's map, and so far nothing's even come close to *GTA*. While the other crime sims have done a good job of recreating *GTA*'s missions, none have even attempted to tackle *GTA*'s bonus missions, secrets or the overriding sense of humour that makes you want to read every sign and follow every pedestrians around just so you can hear their hilarious conversations.

Don't be discouraged by its size though. *San Andreas* has been created to cater equally to both the casual gamer who likes to knock games over quickly and the hardcore *GTA* fan who won't be satisfied until they see that elusive 100% rating. If you're an action junkie who just wants to beat the missions and move on then *San Andreas* will have you covered. If you dug the gameplay in *Vice City* but →



CONVENTION CENTER

You've seen it in *Rush Hour* and we've run madly around it each year for LA's videogames show, E3. The Convention Center is a mammoth building spanning several city blocks.



You've got to love that draw distance



You'll be running this pissant town in a day



The monster trucks can use four-wheel steering



A cut above



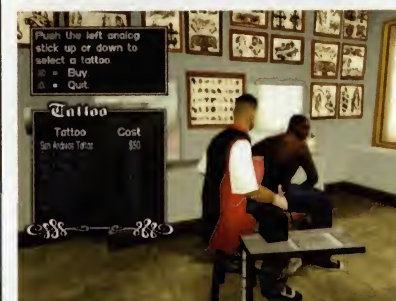
For the first time ever *San Andreas* gives you the chance to style your character however you want. Just around the corner from CJ's home you will find a barber shop where, once you've got the cash, you can get any haircut you want. Everything from comrows and dreadlocks to afros and flattops can be bought. Your haircut has more than a cosmetic affect too because characters will react to you differently according to how CJ looks.

→ found some of the missions far too tough to beat and got put off, *San Andreas*'s new dynamic difficulty adjusts itself to each player on the fly to make sure the game never gets too frustrating. And, of course, if you want to do and see it all you'll be stoked because we've heard Rockstar throwing phrases like "300 hours of gameplay" around the place.

Going bush

Seeing Los Santos (Los Angeles) in action was stunning enough, but it wasn't until we drove out of the city limits and into *San Andreas*' countryside that we really began to get our heads around the game. As we drove from the posh mansions on the hills of Los Santos' Vinewood, the houses slowly gave way to grassy plains and farmhouses, then later to forests and sleepy country towns. The transition from the traditional city-based *GTA* environment to the countryside is completely believable and seamless, thanks to the game's ability to let your drive anywhere in the state without ever

Leaving your mark



Taking your ability to customise CJ another step further, it's also possible to visit tattoo parlours in each of the three cities. Los Santos' tats are mostly to do with gang names, while in San Fierro it's more about Aztec signs and drug iconography, and in Las Venturas it's cards and dice for the high rollers. Once you've selected the tattoo you want you can then choose which of CJ's body parts you want it inked on. To ensure that the images are as authentic as possible, Rockstar has enlisted the help of legendary tattoo artist Mister Cartoon to develop the look for all of the in-game tats.



THE BEACH


Clearly inspired by LA's Santa Monica area, Los Santos' beach will be packed with bathers by day and feature beach parties at night. Taking a swim in the water or a jog in the sand will also keep CJ fit.



VINEWOOD

Taking its cue from Hollywood, Vinewood is the rich movie district of Los Santos. Fingers crossed for Dennis Hopper's movie producer character to make a return. The expensive estates are also great for break and enters.
















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ALIEN vs. PREDATOR



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IN CINEMAS SEPTEMBER 30

GTA San Andreas



Walking on sand actually feels slower than other surfaces



CJ will be made fun of if he's too fat



Eating in

Yet another element of the *San Andreas* world that seems trivial at first but turns out to have a huge effect on the gameplay is CJ's ability to eat. There will be plenty of different food joints scattered around each of the cities in *San Andreas* (we even saw snack vans on the side of the highway in the countryside). Depending on how much and how often you eat, CJ's body weight and stamina will vary greatly. One thing that Rockstar stressed though is that eating will never be a hassle. These gameplay options are all about giving the player choices, not chores. Respect.



Who's phat?

If you eat unhealthy foods too often CJ will turn into a fat bastard like this. His stamina will drop and he'll be puffing and wheezing in no time. You'll also notice that his clothes won't fit properly and he'll have trouble swinging his arms by his side as he walks.



Get the skinny

On the other hand if you don't eat enough CJ will begin to waste away. His energy and strength will drop and he'll have a hard time winning in hand-to-hand fights. Binge eating won't help him though because he'll throw up and won't absorb the food.

Jacked off



Trying to jack cars in *San Andreas* will be a rude shock for players coming from *Vice City*. Unlike the meek drivers in the last game, *San Andreas*' residents will often put up a fight if you try and steal their car. Pressing the Jack button is no longer enough to pull off a successful grand theft auto. It will often be necessary for you to punch, kick, pistol whip and bash their head on the dashboard to convince them to hand the car over.



FREEWAYS

As you've probably picked up from movies, everybody drives everywhere in LA – and the same goes for Los Santos. Huge, multi-layered freeways dominate much of the landscape in *San Andreas*.



RODEO

Home to the most expensive and extravagant clothing stores in the city, the Rodeo district is only for people with stacks of cash – or someone who wants to steal from them.



The police will now chase you much more aggressively

On yer bike

The bikes serve a handful of purposes. First, it's an alternative to the gym that will increase CJ's fitness. The more CJ rides the bike the more skilled he will become - he will fall off less and corner better. The bike is also great for cutting through traffic, down alleys and getting around unnoticed. As the behemoth that is *San Andreas* grows in size you'll notice that it has also gobbled up the extreme bike genre and made *Mat Hoffman* and *Dave Mirra* redundant. CJ can pull off a wide variety of tricks on his bike including bunnyhops, wheelies, endos, 360s and 180s.



Looks like CJ's not the only one who can get tats



→ triggering a loading screen.

The look of the countryside is also considerable richer than the cityscapes. Without the countless buildings, pedestrians and vehicles that need to be rendered in the city, Rockstar has managed to push the game's draw distance out to four times the normal level in the country, making the game feel considerable more free and open. As well as being able to see further the graphics engine is smart enough to populate each environment with accurate vegetation on the fly. Grass will be fairly cropped and green as you're leaving the city, then you'll begin to see longer grass and bigger bushes as you move out.

Our first stop on the countryside road trip was the awesome sight of Mount Chiliad. As with all the new features in *San Andreas*, when Rockstar does something, it does it big. Just flying up to the summit in a helicopter will take a couple of minutes. And once you get up there you'll have 360 degree views of the countryside for kilometres in

Beefing up



As well as the food CJ eats having an impact on his body shape, how hard CJ hits the gym or does exercise in general will effect his muscle bulk. Treadmill and bike exercises will increase his stamina and help him lose body fat, whereas doing weightlifting will increase his strength. CJ has fully articulated muscles for each body part so it's possible to create radically different body shapes depending on what exercises you do.

Exercising has a dramatic effect on gameplay because the more stamina CJ has the faster he will run, swim and pedal, and the stronger he is the more likely he is to win hand-to-hand fights. It's also worth noting that body fat and muscle aren't necessarily opposites. It is possible to build a lot of muscle while getting stuck into the junk food and keeping CJ chubby.

As well as working out in each of *San Andreas*' three gyms CJ can also learn new fighting skills. In Los Santos he can pick up standard fighting moves like boxing, punching while running and punching enemies on the ground. Once you move to San Fierro it's time to hit the dojo for a range of martial arts before picking up some nasty below the belt moves in Las Venturas' seedy gym.

Combat in general is also more advanced in *San Andreas*. CJ uses two different attack buttons to string combos together - plus CJ can block punches and kicks from his enemies.



every direction. At the base of Mount Chiliad is the small town of Angel Pine, complete with a petrol station, a few stores, some grubby looking houses and, of course, a police station. As we cruise around the town we see farmers trundling along on rusty tractors, cowgirls in skimpy outfits riding motorcycles and slow-witted police just begging for us to pick a fight with them.

In the mission that Rockstar demonstrates the new features burst out faster than the bullets from CJ's Uzi. The objective is to track down and kill an FBI witness hiding out in a log cabin. A handy looking ATV is sitting on the other side of a farm fence. Rather than walk around the fence CJ uses one hand to flip himself over it so casually that you wonder how we got by without it in the previous games. CJ jumps on the ATV and takes off in a cloud of dust, showing how smoothly the new vehicle controls by weaving in and out of the lazy local inhabitants. Once he's out of the town CJ's ATV makes light work of the mountain trail as he

→



BROWN STREAK RAILROAD

The trains travel around all parts of Los Santos and are a fast way to get across the city. Watch out when you cross the tracks though because getting smacked by a train is not fun.

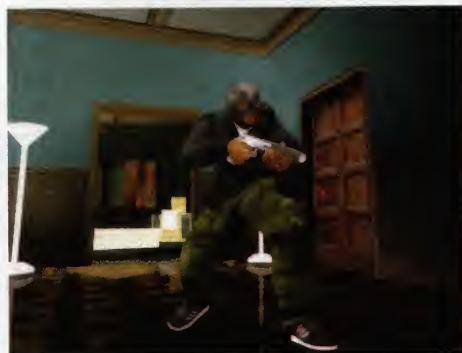


Cars will need washing because they now gather dirt

Breaking and entering



The vehicle bonus missions were arguably the weakest element of the earlier *Grand Theft Auto* games but that's all set to change. As if Rockstar hadn't already packed in ten times as many features as we expected, we recently found out about by far the best set of bonus mission yet. Whenever CJ is in a moving van, clicking R3 will



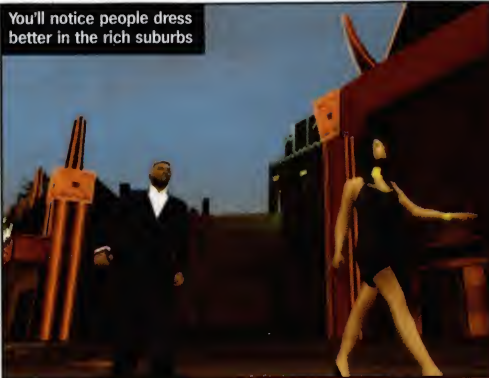
trigger robbery missions. After finding a suitable house you can break in, steal any valuable items, toss them in your truck and take them to sell to your fence. *San Andreas'* advanced AI means that the home owners will react to your invasion in their own unique way. Some might run for the phone as soon as they see you (triggering an instant police rating for you if they manage to contact the cops) and some will prefer to handle the matter on their own with a shotgun. For this reason it's not a good idea to



tackle any home invasions without some serious firepower in your pocket. What's most surprising about these robbery missions is that they tap into some very sophisticated stealth gameplay. Putting on a balaclava (purchased from your local sports store) allows CJ to change into a sneaking mode. In this mode his walking speed slows down and he moves around much more quietly. This is essential for home invasions because *San Andreas'* inhabitants are smart enough to hear you and react accordingly if you make any noise. Although this hasn't been confirmed yet we'd be surprised if the game didn't also feature a visual indicator to show you how well CJ is hidden by shadows.



You'll notice people dress better in the rich suburbs



Starsky and Hutch make a cameo

→ speeds his way up Mount Chiliad. After a couple of kilometres CJ reaches the log cabin and he dismounts from the speeding ATV using an ultra-cool spinning backflip. As soon as he lands, he takes advantage of the new dual-stick controls to shoot-up the Feds. The left analogue stick now lets CJ strafe and run around, while the right analogue stick is used purely for aiming your weapons or looking around.

Once all the FBI agents have been taken care of we get a chance to look around and realise that we've travelled so far up the mountain that there are clouds moving through the trees just above the log cabin. While we were distracted the witness jumps in a car and speeds off down the mountain. CJ jumps back on the ATV and chases him, using the motorcycle-style ability to shoot forwards with his Uzi to pepper the car with bullets until it crashes. As soon as the witness jumps out of the car CJ busts a cap in his ass and pulls out his camera to take a snap of the dead body to prove he's completed the mission. With the mission sorted CJ hops

back on the ATV and takes a short-cut down the mountain. As CJ speeds down the mountain the graphics shift into a *Need for Speed*-style motion blur that looks brilliant.

Getting high

To give us a better view of the country CJ hops into one of *Grand Theft Auto's* famous Dodo planes and takes to the skies (thankfully this one has wings, and it isn't a seaplane, so you can use it anywhere). Cruising at a few hundred metres up the Dodo is flying amongst wispy clouds and cruising over thick forests, old farmsteads and little streams. Best of all, this is *GTA*, so you you'll be able to swim in the rivers, knock fishermen out of their little boats, find hidden weapons and crazy locals in the farm houses and discover all sorts of bonus missions and secrets wherever you look.

Our tour through the countryside of *San Andreas* may have been painfully brief but it was more than enough to convince us that not only has Rockstar successfully managed



Pedestrians have new animations like smoking and drinking



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Gang Bang



The advanced AI that *San Andreas'* citizens have extends to every element of the game. The best implementation we've seen so far of this is with the gang members. As well as featuring new animations like smoking and drinking, gang members will react to other gang members when they come across them in the street, starting up conversations and throwing signs at each other.

By completing missions and buying pimping clothes you can earn more respect from fellow gang members. This respect is important because it means that your gang members will automatically help you out by attacking any police or rival gang members that are chasing you. This support from your gang can be used as an asset in later missions if you decide to lure enemies into your turf.

Of course, the downside to this gang gameplay is that rival gangs are just as smart. If they see CJ in their territory they won't hesitate to attack him. The improved AI means that it's now much harder to predict what tactics enemy gangs will use when they attack you. They might rush you as a group, try to run you over, perform a drive-by on you or distract you with a couple of guys while the rest hang back and wait until you're weak before closing in to finish you off.



CJ has to bash stubborn drivers before they'll leave their car



Doin' it your way



Rockstar had told us how it was possible to choose your own style of clothes, hair, tattoos and body shape to mould CJ into whatever image you wanted but it wasn't really brought home until we saw this version of CJ. This buffed, blinged and tatt'd up CJ is miles away from the meek skinny guy we were first introduced to. Do you want your CJ to be a fat pimp with an obsession for burgers and baseball bats or a calculating, suit wearing hitman with a crew cut and a preference for sniper rifles? This really is a 'choose your own adventure'.

→ to create an entire living, breathing state, but it's managed to do so without diluting any of the *Grand Theft Auto* flavour that we've all come to love.

Although we didn't get a chance to visit San Fierro (San Francisco) and Las Venturas (Las Vegas) – that's coming next month – we did get to check out a gob-smacking swag of new features in Los Santos. From robbing houses and playing basketball to getting tattoos and haircuts, the amount of non-mission-based activities will keep you busy for months. Despite all the amazing gameplay we saw in *San Andreas*, there was one definite problem. Although we'd happily put money down now on this being the best game of the year, it's so massive that we can't see ourselves being able to put the game down until at least February or March next year. And considering how many other great looking games are coming to PS2 this year, that's a lot of quality releases we're just not going to have time to touch. Somehow, we think we'll manage though. ↴

Shop till you drop

As well as haircuts and tats, CJ has complete control over the clothes he wears. As he begins to work his way into the Orange Grove gang his mates will encourage him to wear gang colours. However, while doing this will increase the respect from your gang members it will also mark you out as a target to rival gangs and the police.

CJ can choose from a lot more than gang colours when he's shopping for threads though. In Los Santos alone there are three different clothing stores. Binco is your standard budget option, SubUrban clothes cost a bit more but will get you respect from the ladies and ProLaps is the sporting goods store of choice. Dressing differently affects the level of attraction women feel for CJ and the amount that men are intimidated by him.

Making the clothing options even more realistic, individual items and not just outfits can be purchased from each of the stores in the game and every single item of clothing you have bought during the course of the game will be stored in CJ's closet at home. This way players can mix and match clothes whenever they want to allow CJ to continue to evolve.



Whole new ball game



Rockstar has been infuriatingly vague about exactly what this screen shot means. It clearly shows CJ playing a game of basketball and Rockstar has confirmed that it is not from a cutscene – it's definitely in-game. But whether this is a simple mini-game where you try to score as many hoops as possible or whether it's a full-blown game of basketball is unknown. Imagine if basketball isn't the only sport you can play in *San Andreas*? Whatever happens, the fact that you can walk up to a basketball court and start a game is pretty amazing.

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DID YOU KNOW?

Pixar's CEO, Steve Jobs, is a man many would call insane, but he just believes in quality. Which is why every last part of the massive Pixar building was hand-made and installed.



Mr. Incredible is incredibly good at lifting

WORDS: MICHELLE STARR

Meet THE INCREDIBLES

They're incredible!

M eet Bob Parr. Bob Parr was a superhero fifteen years ago. Now, Bob and his wife live incognito with their three children in suburbia, thanks to nasty lawyers, normal folk, living a normal life. Until good ol' Bob, missing the good ol' days, has a midlife crisis and dons his superhero identity once more to become... Mr. Incredible!

The Incredibles marks several firsts for Pixar. It's the first Pixar film to feature human protagonists, and the first Pixar film to be written and directed by *The Iron Giant*, *The Simpsons* and *King of the Hill* veteran, Brad Bird. Who, Pixar freely admit, stretched their creative team and technology to the limit with his demands for some of the hardest objects to render in CG — human hair, fire,

REALISM VS. BELIEVABILITY

The team at Pixar don't believe in making a realistic film. It's a fairly common mistake to think they do. The level of detail in each render is amazing. Mention the word "realistic," though, and they're quick to correct you. "It's not about making realistic films," says Pixar University's Liz Greenberg, "but believable films." Which, when you think about it, makes much more sense. "Fish don't talk," explains Liz about *Finding Nemo*. "We put just enough realism into our films to make them believable." The rest is just sheer imagination. Some things react realistically, but the characters in *The Incredibles* are more cartoon-looking than realistic.





Mr. Incredible vs. the Evil Green Dot of Evil

explosions, and clothing. The result of Brad Bird's insistence on the nigh-impossible, and a huge number of animators and computers working damned hard, is an eminently believable – and human – film.

So, where is this going? Well, there is a shiny new *The Incredibles* game in the works, based on this masterpiece of Pixar's. And we had to fly all the way to California to get you an exclusive up close and personal. It's a hard life. But it wasn't for nothing – Heavy Iron and THQ's take on the Incredible family is shaping up to be a pretty sleek title in its own right.

Now, there's no denying that *Finding Nemo* and *Monsters Inc.* were definitely games that were targeted at, shall we say, somewhat younger audiences. If you're expecting the same from *The Incredibles*, you might be in for a bit of a surprise. While it does undoubtedly have young appeal, there's a lot in there for older gamers, too.

The game will follow the story of the film, over 20 levels. Since Pixar is keeping a pretty tight lid on their creation, we only saw a few of these, but they're looking pretty solid, with a combination of gorgeously crafted, interactive environments and multiple characters.

About those. We know there will be five. We know, also, (officially, at least), who the first four are. And we can take a pretty educated guess at who the fifth will be. Five members of the Incredible family – five playable characters – well, you do the math. Since each of these characters has very different abilities and powers, there's going to be diverse gameplay.

We only saw three of the characters in action – Mr. Incredible, Mrs Incredible (alias Elastigirl)



Baby in a Burning Building minus the baby

MRS INCREDIBLE

DID YOU KNOW?

Monsters Inc. hero Sully had over three million hairs on his body, individually animated. Apparently, this was nothing compared to the difficulty of animating human hair.

THE LOGO

Any self-respecting superhero will have a logo of some kind, usually emblazoned across his or her chest for easy identification. Design will ideally reflect the superhero's name, team or power in some way.

IT FIGURES

The female superhero usually has quite a shapely body – even after bearing three children. This is because she has to stay in absolute tip-top shape for beating down those bad guys...

OVER-DERPS

Superheroes have a tendency to wear their unders on the outer. As far as we normies can tell, there is no real reason for this – it just seems to be a sort of superhero club thing. Maybe they're just stingy with the washing detergent.

THE MASK

It's a well-known fact that the judicious application of a small strip of fabric with eyeholes cut out will render the wearer instantly unrecognisable, making it a perfect superhero disguise. Either that, or false glasses while in "civilian" mode.

OOOH, SHINY

The female superhero will invariably have gorgeous, full, shining hair. It will be clean, and smell like meadows in the springtime. However, it is *not* advisable to go around sniffing ladies' heads to check – these super-babes can pack a punch.

GLOVES

Most superheroes will wear gloves. This is to protect their hands from many of the nasty substances that a superhero can come in contact with, but it will also prevent the hero's civilian identification leaking out through careless fingerprints.

THIGH-HIGH

You'll often find the female superhero wearing thigh-high, dominatrix-style boots. This is to get an unspoken message across to the enemy – try doing bad stuff, and she'll dominate all over yo' ass... in a BAD way.

MR INCREDIBLE



FIVE O'CLOCK SHADOW

A definite mark of virility and manhood, a five o'clock shadow is nevertheless a sure-fire sign of a superhero gone slightly to seed. Either that, or he couldn't find his razor this morning.

QUIRKY QUIFF

Not to be confused with a quaff (which involves ale), a quiff is a must-have for today's clean-cut hero. Expected to be thick and luxuriant, but may be a little thinner on the top when you're dealing with the older hero.

DID YOU KNOW?

Brad Bird was the first Pixar director ever recruited from the outside, and *The Incredibles* is his brainchild. Apparently he had them simmering away in his brain for quite a few years...

SUPER BELT

To hold in that expanding waistline, hold utilities and add a touch of definition to the otherwise uninteresting lycra bodysuit. No self-respecting hero would be seen dead without a decent utility belt.

MACHO MAN

You can always tell a super-strong superhero — they're the ones who look like a prophylactic stuffed with walnuts. Keep your eyes open for anyone built like a Bulck. Chances are they're an incognito superhero.

DID YOU KNOW?

Superheroes aren't a new phenomenon at all. For millennia, different cultures have been telling tales of the prodigious feats of gods and heroes.

SUPER JUMP!

In addition to amazing strength, the superhero will be possessed of secondary abilities, such as agility and the ability to leap tall buildings in a single bound. Strength alone would be a bit of a waste if it couldn't be handled.



Mrs Incredible goes the long distance grope

and their son, Dash. As you can probably guess, Mr Incredible is the brawler of the piece. He is possessed of prodigious size, strength, agility and durability. Since playing him will take up about 45% of game time, this means you'll spend a lot of time smashing and bashing and cracking bad-guy heads.

It's when you play the other characters that things get really interesting, though. "Anyone can pick up a gun and start shooting," says Heavy Iron's Shiraz Akmal. "Our game is about characterization, not weapons, and about encouraging the player to think creatively about using the characters' powers."

This is a bit more evident when you take a look at Mrs Incredible. Similar to *The Fantastic Four's* Mr Fantastic, her main power involves... well, stretchiness. This means that you can use her as a ranged fighter, since she can reach out and grab enemies. Also, her melee fighting style is very different to Mr Incredible's.

But it doesn't end with the fighting. Each level is specifically tailored to a specific character. In the levels featuring Mr Incredible, you'll find heavy items that you can pick up and throw at your enemies, and puzzles



Dash resembles Mighty Mouse in more than size

involving feats of brute strength. Obviously, that won't work with Mrs Incredible, whose talents tend more towards reaching things that other characters cannot, and swinging around like Tarzan on her stretchy arms.

Dash is different again. As his name might suggest, he specializes in moving at high speeds. Initially, your control of Dash will involve using his power sparingly, since, as a young boy, he has not learned how to control it properly, and will overheat.

However, Pixar is keeping Dash fairly under wraps for now, as with his sister, Violet, whose powers – invisibility and a force field – we have not seen in action; we only know that her powers will be used in both an offensive as well as a defensive capacity. The fifth Incredible, Jack Jack, seems to be Pixar's most closely-guarded secret.

The game's coming together quite well. From what we've seen, there's very little that gets lost in translation between movie and game. Challenging as it might seem to transport Pixar graphics across to the PS2, the authenticity of Heavy Iron's effort is undeniable. Using only the poses and animations that can be found in the movie, Heavy Iron has striven to maintain consistency, hoping the player will feel like they're in an interactive version of the film.

In fact, the two teams worked very closely together to come up with something that everyone was happy with, and to provide the most entertainment to both moviegoers and gamers alike. "You won't get the full story by playing the game," said Lyle Hall of Heavy Iron, "And you won't get all the action by watching the movie." While the movie focuses on the characters and their story, there will be extra little story tidbits added in to the game. Heavy Iron tells us that this is because sometimes, the scenes in the movie weren't enough to showcase the talents of the characters in a game setting. Also, "How do you turn a two-hour movie into a twenty-hour game?" asks Shiraz. And then goes on to demonstrate Dash's very first level, a scene in which he is running late for school, which doesn't appear in the movie. "You think about the character and a situation they might find themselves in, and you go from there."

Character. It's a word we heard a lot. The game is, of course, about action. It wouldn't be a game if it wasn't. But all of the gameplay, all of the action, stems from this key point – who the characters are, and what they can do. It draws you in, and lets you know that, for all their super powers, these characters are human.

You'd be forgiven for thinking otherwise of the enemy characters, though. Heavy Iron tells us about how the team, needing more baddies to flesh out the game a little, asked Pixar if they could design a few of their own. Pixar did them one better. Early in the film's development, they decided they had way more bad-guy concept art than they needed, and dropped a whole bunch from the film, and it was a stack "this big!", declares Shiraz, holding his hands about a foot or so apart. It's definitely an incentive for Pixar fans, who might not necessarily see some of these wacky character

DID YOU KNOW?

The massive atrium in the centre of Pixar Studios was created as a place for workers to communicate – encouraging Pixar's credo, "Art as a team sport."



FACE OFF

Facial expression and body language are integral parts of human communication. Pixar maintain that this is at the core of great character animation – the ability to convey the thoughts and emotions of the characters through nonverbal communication. If you can't tell what a character is feeling, then you can't understand why they act the way they do, and you cannot empathise with them.



designs otherwise. And good fun for Heavy Iron, who, with no animations set by Pixar, could animate the characters freely to respond in the best way possible to make you stretch the Incredibles to their limits.

The game features other bonus material as well – An unlockable artwork gallery and an unlockable level. What about costumes? "Err, no. The costumes are set by the story. Now that you mention it, that outfit you saw today, Mr Incredible in the black shirt, that would be good to work in," Lyle enthuses, "I'll have to ask Pixar about that." Don't say we don't do anything for you – If you see Mr. Incredible in a black shirt, you know who to thank.


Then, it was our turn at the controller. First of all, we took Mr Incredible for a test drive. Surprisingly, the response times were fantastic. Surprising, because Heavy Iron had already admitted that it was difficult to cut down Mr Incredible's movie moves into something that was workable for a game. Also, although the camera moved well on its own, we had full 3D control of it at the same time. He was smooth, he was strong, and he took out enemies with a single punch. Luckily, Heavy Iron

assured us that they get tougher later in the game.

Then it was Mrs Incredible's turn. "She's our favourite," said Lyle. It wasn't hard to see why. Her moves took a little more complex thought than Mr Incredible's, but once we got the hang of it, grabbing enemies and tossing them away like the garbage they were was great fun, and we could have spent all day ducking and rolling around.

The best thing about Dash was the way the screen warped when we used his speed boost, and the way the edges of the screen blurred past at higher speeds, one of the best speed effects we've ever seen.

Heavy Iron has retained most of the original voice cast for the movie too, including Holly Hunter, Jason Lee, and best of all, Samuel L. Jackson.

All in all, a very neat and tidy package indeed. While trying to get certain information out of Pixar and Heavy Iron was like trying to get blood from a stone, what they did show us has left us pleasantly surprised, and looking forward to the game's release. Place requisite "incredible" pun here. 





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The Omega Strain has been released.

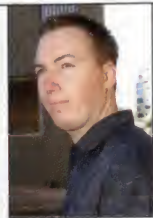
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PlayStation 2

PLAY-TEST



WELCOME!

Codemasters has finally returned with the sequel to the original *V8 Supercars* game. This time they've added HRT in a move that's bound to have fans roaring. As the fortunate magazine to

land the country's first review we wasted no time in taking this baby 'round the blocks! Turn the page and find out how it fared. And don't forget *Burnout 3* – it's only the first game in a year to get a perfect 10/10. You need to hit this.

NARAYAN PATTISON
DEPUTY EDITOR

REVIEW CHARTER

FACT: OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE's reviews are the best in the business. Our squad of reviewers play the games longer, harder and better than anyone. And we love what we do.

It's this dedication that means you can trust our comments and scores above anyone else's. Whether a game's superb or sewage, our experts will tell it like it is with buckets of opinion. Our experienced reviewers have written for the game industry's most revered publications, both here in Australia and overseas. Rest assured that these are opinions you can trust.

REVIEW RATINGS

HERE'S WHAT OUR REVIEW SCORES STAND FOR:

- 10/10** Nigh on revolutionary. A game that could change the face of gaming forever
- 09/10** A truly astonishing game. If you have a PlayStation 2, you need this now
- 08/10** Highly recommended
- 07/10** Good, solid fare that's definitely well worth a look
- 06/10** Better than average, and ideal for hardcore fans of the genre
- 05/10** An average game
- 04/10** Poor, but still with the odd moment
- 03/10** Extremely disappointing
- 02/10** To be avoided
- 01/10** Beer mat

THE OPS2 AWARDS

We don't hand out high scores for nothing, so when you see one of these, you'll know it's a sign of quality. Look for them on game boxes.



The Gold Award is a rare gem and only to be given to games that score that magic 10/10. This score indicates gaming of simply incredible quality!



The Silver Award is for games that receive 9/10. If you see this, it's a sign of star quality, indicating that you should buy this game now!



The Bronze Award is for games that score 8/10. These games are highly recommended and are 100% guaranteed to satisfy.



V8 SUPERCARS 2

56

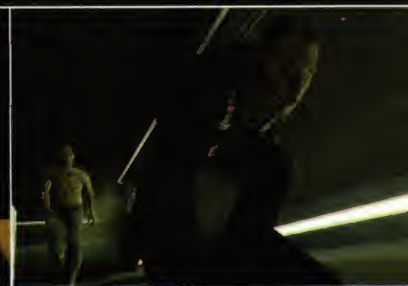
You're going to just love hammering down Conrod Straight!



BURNOUT 3

60

Could this be the surprise racer of the year? We're willing to put a wager on it...



SECOND SIGHT

64

The best telekinetic shooter ever!



CONFLICT: VIETNAM

63

Nam's more than a top holiday destination!



CRISIS ZONE

70

Time Crisis meets Terminator



THE X-FILES

72

Scully returns! Woohooo!

PLAY-TEST



DETAILS

DISTRIBUTOR: CODEMASTERS
DEVELOPER: ATARI
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1-8
OUT: OCTOBER
WEBSITE: WWW.CODEMASTERS.COM/V8SUPERCARS2
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: YES
ONLINE: YES

BACK STORY

Codemasters is no amateur when it comes to racing sims. It's been behind some classics like the Colin McRae series and the TOCA racing series. It's also had experience with F1 racing with Grand Prix Simulator. Now it's bringing all its racing knowledge and experience together, plus a few V8's, too.

BETTER THAN

R: RACING EVOLUTION

WORSE THAN

BURNOUT 3

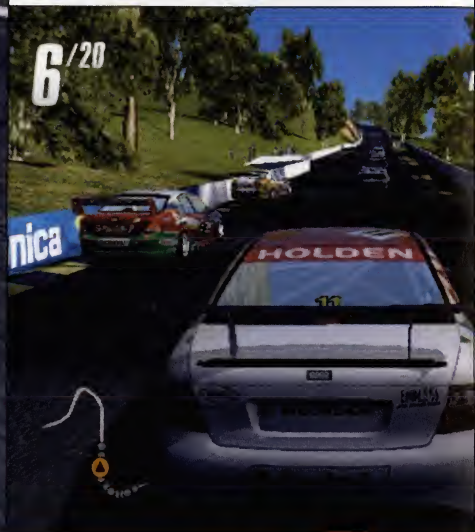
LAB TEST

What they nailed this time

Driving physics. Forget driving tests, this is where you should learn to drive

What they need to fix

Sound. We love our engines roaring but we're not deaf



RACING

V8 SUPERCARS 2

Gentlemen, start your engines

Five years ago a racing sim would have received high praise if it contained more than ten cars, more than five tracks and visuals that looked 'sort of' realistic. But because these days racing sims are all about realism (funnily enough) they now need to have a large variety of cars that drive exactly like their real life counterparts, have a huge selection of tracks and look indistinguishable from the real thing if they want to get noticed. Although we've seen a lot of fine performers, we're still waiting for the one game that would blur the lines between simulation and reality. We were convinced that *Gran Turismo 4* would be the first game to give us this experience, but after spending just five minutes with *V8 Supercars 2*, we're now thinking that it may grab the chequered flag first.

With a name like *V8 Supercars*, you'd be crazy not to think that it's going to be chock-full of Holdens, Fords and other V8 monsters. But assuming that's all the cars you'll see is like assuming Miriam was a woman. Not only will you get to race all of the official Holden and Ford cars, but you'll also get to take another 30 beasts out for a spin including the Mitsubishi 3000 GT, Subaru Impreza WRX and even a big rig (See *Keep On Truckin'*). While it's not even close to the total found in *Gran Turismo 4*, you're definitely getting the best of the best here and no matter what car you select from the list, it's going to be top class.

GUTS TO GLORY

You'll get to test drive the majority of V8's monsters in the Season mode, where you star as an up-and-coming





racer clawing up the ranks to try and make the big time. Sound familiar? Luckily the Season mode is not too story driven, so it doesn't interfere with the racing too much. However if you do decide to cruise through the season then you'll need to complete some set goals that will require you to either earn big money or get a podium finish in the championship.

Your character's legs will be cramped by the end of the season from climbing up on top of all those podiums. There are 33 championships in V8 Supercars 2 that cover 15 different types of motor sports. Unfortunately you won't get to select your weapon of choice during the tournaments, but don't worry because you'll never be stuck with a lemon.

You'll also be surprised at how all 15 motor sports play exactly like they should and sometimes even better than some videogames that focus purely on just one of these sports. One example is the Formula One races. Each of the cars handles exactly like the real thing and actually play a lot better than those in the new *Formula One 04*. While it doesn't feature any of the tracks from the Official F1 series, the gameplay leaves the majority of F1 sims for dead. And you thought this was just going to be about V8 cars, didn't you?

LET'S GET PHYSICAL

Achieving all of the game's goals is a tall order for two reasons. The first is due to car handling. Every vehicle in V8 Supercars 2 handles exactly like it should. Because you can't drive a Holden Commodore VY the same way you can drive a Nissan Skyline GT, you constantly need to change your driving style and strategy. Driving gets

"the Season mode is not too story driven, so it doesn't interfere with the racing"

harder than steering a shopping trolley when you start playing around with the difficulty levels. The higher you go in difficulty, the more realistic the driving gets – meaning the more unforgiving it is. This feature is greater than cup holders on a hot day because it stops you from driving the same way throughout the entire game and forces you to think about each race individually. Not only is this a lot more challenging, it also stops the racing from getting stale quickly. While there'll be times where you'll get a dose of road rage, you can restart the race at any time to avoid losing valuable career points.

The other reason this game is a tough cookie is the computer AI. Like you, the computer-controlled cars are out there to win and they will do so by any means necessary. This means not letting you overtake, giving you a nudge when you're taking a corner and driving so

far up your ass that you'll find it difficult to sit down for the next few days. The best part is that they'll also play these dirty tricks on the other AI drivers as well, so you don't need to feel bad about doing all the dirty driving yourself. You'd also be forgiven in mistaking the AI drivers for human drivers as they also vary in skill level.

You'll notice during races that some AI drivers take corners perfectly while others will skid out into the sand. This is fantastic for those who aren't able to appreciate the online component of V8 Supercars 2 as it doesn't make you feel like you're driving against 20 other drivers who are programmed to drive in the exact same way every time.

You'll be able to compete online or split-screen in the Simulation mode. In this mode, which is basically the Season mode without the cut-scenes, you'll have all of the championships and tracks at your disposal. You'll also have all of the drivers from the V8 Supercar series, so if you want to recreate the infamous Mark Skaife/Russell Ingall rivalry then you can do so here. The only downer about this mode is that the menu screen makes jumping straight in to a race harder than hot wiring a Mercedes. Firstly you need to select what championship you want to compete in, then the track and finally the car. The problem is you probably won't know what tracks are in which championship and more importantly, which cars will be available unless the championship name is something obvious like Mustang Challenge. However once you're locked in and the light has gone green, there's a lot of fun to be had knocking your buddies into the side barriers.

However, this is something you should avoid doing because you'll damage your vehicle in more ways than one. That's right, we said it. Unlike GT4, V8 Supercars 2 does feature damage physics. Glass will smash, bumpers

HOW'S THIS FOR EXCLUSIVE?

While the PS2 is the last to receive V8 Supercars 2, the wait has definitely been worth it. Not only do we get everything Xbox owners got, but we also get an extra track (Catalunya) and the Pro-Sim mode, for the most realistic driving this side of Gran Turismo 4. Who said waiting was for suckers?





will bend and if your door comes off its hinges then you'll need to avoid running over it on the next lap.

Of course, damaging your vehicle is not recommended – despite how cool it looks – because if you do decide to turn the race into a destruction derby then you'll find yourself eliminated from the party pretty quickly as your car's performance will drastically decline and you'll move slower than a dog with no legs.

You'll know when you'll need a tow truck by the gauges on your screen changing colours. They will start off clear. The more you drive like a drunken maniac the quicker they will change to yellow, orange and finally red. Once one of your gauges turns red, your sorry ass will be towed back to the pits and it will be game over for you. Track wise, *V8 Supercars 2* has a lot to offer. While they're not as photo-realistic as *GT4*, each of the 52 tracks still looks like a work of art. One thing we've noticed with all the tracks is that no matter what track it is, it's always sunny, even in Melbourne. We would have welcomed some variation in the weather, as it would have really made things a lot more challenging, especially as we constantly have to change our driving styles. Some night races would've been good to see as well as there are some great lighting effects in *V82*, and night races would have showcased how great the game looks on the PS2. However, it doesn't matter if it's

KEEP ON TRUCKIN'

During the season mode you'll have the opportunity to race in the International Supertruck championship where you'll compete in a big rig against six other bad boys. If you thought steering a pram with a dodgy wheel was hard, wait until you get behind these boys. There's no drifting here, so if you take the corner too fast and turn too sharply then you'll jack knife quicker than Naz doing a shot of Schnapps. Fortunately, it's only one race, so you'll be back behind the wheel of a roaring V8 in no time.



Laguna Seca or Vallenga, all the tracks from around the world look stunning. But the real hidden treasures are the ones from down under. The Surfers Paradise track is surrounded by hotels and its beautiful beach, Adelaide combines its beautiful city landscape with some Aussie bush and Oran Park features the stunning Blue Mountains in the backdrop. But when you think of Australian V8 Supercars, the first track that comes to everyone's mind is Bathurst and it is definitely king of the mountain. Anyone who races here will immediately get an adrenalin rush like Brocky and the gang. When you hit the track for the first time you'll quickly understand what intense V8 racing is all about, as every corner needs to be taken perfectly in order to stay in the race and one mistake can mean the end. It's an edge of your seat experience that needs to be taken to be understood.

NO SUCH THING AS SAFE SPEEDING?

Unfortunately we feel this experience would have been more enjoyable had there been a real sense of speed in *V8 Supercars 2*. While you can definitely tell that some cars move faster than others, you don't actually get the feeling that you're racing at high speeds. The V8's can get up to over 250kmph but at no point do you actually feel like you're doing half that. While we know *V82* is a simulation and not an arcade racer, some blur effects on the straights (similar to those in *Need for Speed Underground* and *Burnout 3*) would have made the racing more intense.

Another issue we have is with the sound department. The first complaint is with the sounds of some of the vehicles. The V8s should sound like a pack of lions, but instead sounds like a Hyundai Excel with a hole in the muffler. We know Polyphony has recorded every one of the 500 cars for *GT4*, but we get the impression here that Codemasters went out and recorded their Porsche and just played around with the pitch so that it kind of sounds like the cars in the

"The V8's should sound like a pack of lions, but instead sounds like a Hyundai Excel"

game. This takes away a lot from the atmosphere, especially for anyone who is a V8 freak and loves the feeling they get from hearing a roaring Holden Commodore hitting 200kmph.

The other sound issue we have is that the only music in the entire game is the generic tune for menus. There's no music during the season mode, none during the races and not even a note in the replays. Music in a racing sim is about as important as beer in a beer bong. The sound of a hard rocking track



playing while you're screaming down Conrod Straight at Bathurst would no doubt get anyone's heart racing faster than a jackhammer. While it's hugely disappointing there are no rocking tunes accompanying races, we're confident Codemasters will grease up and repair this for *V8 Supercars 3*.

Okay, so maybe *V8 Supercars 2* is still a few car lengths behind *Gran Turismo 4*, but it's definitely the closest anyone else has been to out-driving the racing sim king. It's a damn shame that Codemasters didn't pull it off because it's only couple of minor issues that stop it from driving like a dream.

The driving physics are some of the best we've seen in any racing game on the market and the constant changing of driving styles to suit the different vehicles allow us to drive all night long without getting fatigued. We would have preferred to have chosen our vehicles for the multiplayer modes and then raced on the tracks of our choice but we're sure this will be installed in next year's model. However, these minor complaints should not stop anyone from racing out and picking up *V8 Supercars 2*, as it's still a fine racing sim worthy of a podium finish. **Paul Frew**

OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	09	The V8s have never looked so good
Sound	06	Some cars sound like they need a service
Gameplay	10	Every vehicle reacts exactly like it should
Lifespan	08	Changing the difficulty levels will keep your busy

A must have for both fans of real V8 events and racing sims alike.

09

TALE OF THE TAPE

We all know *V8 Supercars 2* is *Gran Turismo 4*'s greatest rival, but just how does it measure up?

	V8 SUPERCARS 2		GRAN TURISMO 4	
CARS	34 - It's quality over quantity	9	500 - There's definitely something for everyone	10
TRACKS	Real life circuits from around the world	9	Some great locations, but no hometown	9
GAMEPLAY	Some of the best driving physics ever and you can damage your car	10	Perfect driving simulation, but no damage	9
GRAPHICS	Captures everything about each location, but it's not GT4	9	Photo-realistic. Hold a postcard up and you won't be able to tell the difference	10
RESULT	The closest any game has come to beating the ultimate racing sim	47	It's still the king, but for how much longer?	48



Roaring Holdens are 'pack' animals



X RACING

BURNOUT 3: TAKEDOWN

The latest arcade racer guarantees to leave skidmarks.

DETAILS

DISTRIBUTOR: EA
DEVELOPER: CRITERION
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1-6
OUT: NOW
WEBSITE: WWW.BURNOUT3.EA.COM
60HZ MODE: YES
WIDESCREEN: YES
SURROUND SOUND: YES
ONLINE: YES

BACK STORY

The Burnout series has always been the jewel in the crown for Criterion Software, single-handedly bringing back a true sense of excitement to the arcade racing genre that was otherwise growing stale and predictable.

Think fast. Think of a bat out of hell with an afterburner strapped to its arse, shot full of speeding bullets as it plummets towards Earth from a low orbit at terminal velocity astride a bolt of greased lightning. Now you're beginning to get an idea of how fast Burnout 3 is. Settle into a comfortable bean bag, edge closer to the screen and grip that controller tight. You're going to need every ounce of concentration and every neuron pulsing in unison to guide this finely-engineered chunk of steel to the finish line and keep it in the same shape in the process. Yes, the bad boys from Criterion Software are back, and under the wing of software giant Electronic Arts they've riced up the racing like you wouldn't believe.

WHERE'D YOU GET YOUR LICENCE?

It doesn't take much to realise that the most enjoyable aspect of the previous games was nudging your opponent off the track and into obstacles. The satisfaction of watching your competition doing a pretty good impression of a piano accordion as you speed off to victory had to be experienced to be believed. It was the sort of thing that would have you leaping off the couch and power-thrusting at the poor schmuck with the other controller (or in the event of a single player game, whoever has the misfortune to pass by copped the pelvis work). In their latest effort, Criterion has bottled that goodness and made it the main focus of the game. While the game may be subtitled 'Takedown' and not the more apt 'Ram the other cars off the road and watch in glee as they explode in a shower of flame and metal

fragments', it really translates to the former description. It really makes Burnout 2's Chase Mode look like a Sunday drive in a 1978 Volvo. Aggressive racing is not only encouraged, it's rewarded.

Take another racer off the tarmac and the camera will do a fast pan back to your helpless victim, showing you just how badly you've messed them up. Their twisted chassis twirls in slow motion like it's attempting a macabre pirouette. The new damage models mean that damage can be as subtle as slight body denting or a lost side-vision mirror, or as extreme as shattering panels, busting windshields and the car literally exploding into a fireball. After your fleeting moment to admire your handiwork, the camera fast pans back to your view of the action.

The use of transitional camera for crashes is a master stroke – it allows you to witness the glory of an induced high-speed wreck, but manages to put you back into the driver's seat with little to no disorientation. Your own crashes can similarly be admired in slow-mo, and are even rated like Tony Hawk tricks for the number of flips your car does, how far it skids on its roof and so on. You even have a limited degree of control over your vehicle during the crash, and can guide your battered ride to cause other racers to pile up into the confusion. Particularly potent crashes end up with wreckage disappearing over distant hills, plummeting off coastal cliffs and even coming to rest in fifth storey apartments.

While your turbo bar grows from the usual dangerous manoeuvres like driving into oncoming traffic, narrowly missing other cars, getting air and drifting (rally-style

BETTER THAN

BURNOUT 2

WORSE THAN

ARE YOU KIDDING?

LAB TEST

What they nailed this time

Blinding speed, tight control, tonnes of game modes AND online play

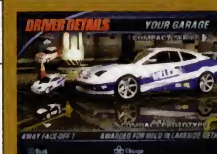
What they need to fix

Umm... maybe let you get under the bonnet a bit more



THE CAR CRASH TEST

Check out the sweet rides in Burnout 3



COMPACT SERIES

Compact Prototype

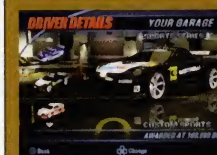
Compacts are the weakest cars in the game. Upgrade as soon as you can.



MUSCLE SERIES

Muscle Type 3

This is one of the sportier muscle cars but all of them have a great deal of power.



SPORTS SERIES

Custom Sports

Now we're talking, each one of the sports cars handles well and goes at ludicrous speeds. Just what you want.



SUPER SERIES

Dominator Super

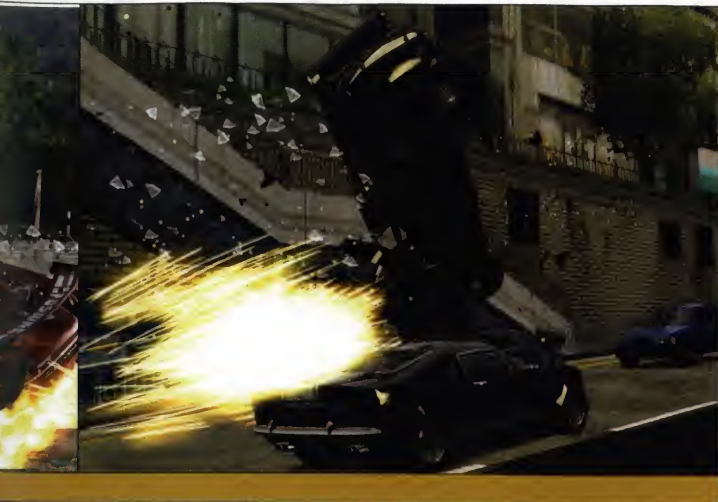
These are the cars that'll put hair on your chest. Just trying to corner is tough, let alone dodge traffic.



SPECIAL SERIES

US Circuit Racer

The ultimate motorised fantasy. Just point it at the road and press the accelerator. Magic.



RAM UNTO OTHERS

Without a doubt, the most rewarding Takedowns are Signature Takedowns. Requiring a great deal of skill and precision, Signature Takedowns involve destroying your opponent in specific ways, and each track features several of their own unique variations. Without a doubt, the most popular in OPS2 Towers is smashing your fellow racers over guardrails on twisting coastal trails and sending their car straight to the bottom of the bay, lovingly called a 'Gone Fishin'. See how many you can find.



(Insert gratuitous comic book sound effect here)



Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No! It's Naz, crashing horribly!

cornering), the new takedowns are the way to keep the high-speed hijinks going. While the devil-may-care driving of old will give you a gradual increase in boost, smashing your opposition off the road will instantly fill your boost bar and increase its capacity by one hundred percent. Subsequent sideswipes without crashing can lead to having four times the boost bar you start with, while getting yourself written off loses one standard boost bar.

DESTRUCTION ON A GLOBAL SCALE

The main component of the single player game is the Crash Nav mode. This involves a variety of racing events over the three continents in of North America, Europe and Asia on a staggering seventy tracks. Each area showcases tracks that not only look different in terms of texturing, but are designed differently too. The American tracks are chiefly multi-laned freeways that roll from coastal cliffs to bustling cities, narrow European roads weave through dense, snowy metropolitan areas and past stately manors, while the Asian streets are packed with traffic and track through busy commercial districts.

As well as marked attention to the architecture and stylings of the surrounds, each continent features its own distinctive traffic that typify the area, like bulky Yank Winnebagos and svelte Spanish smartcars. Causing a massive pileup of tuk-tuks in crowded Hong Kong streets is a great laugh and comes highly recommended. You're made to race in a variety of different vehicles, so there's always the added challenge of getting accustomed to the handling and performance of each car class, as well

as a progression in how devious the computer controlled racers become.

While even Race Mode isn't exactly pure racing, there's more than a few variants to enjoy as well. Road Rage throws the rulebook out the window, and is purely concerned with sending as many of your racing pals to the junkyard as possible in a limited time. Eliminator is a five lap endurance event, where the unlucky racer at the tail end of the pack each lap gets reduced to a

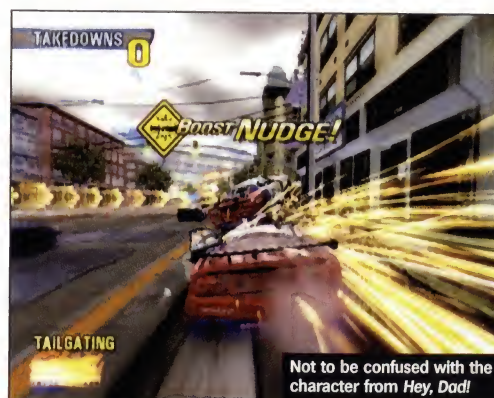
"Causing a massive pileup of tuk-tuks in Hong Kong is a great laugh..."

smouldering heap and the last man left is declared the victor. There's also Face Off which pits you against an AI racer for pink slips, and the aptly named Burning Lap, a race against the clock for the best lap times.

The ever popular Crash Mode is back and similarly bigger than ever, with around a hundred different Crash Junctions to weave your destruction with. A couple of changes you'll notice are the powerup system that can be harnessed for even greater insurance premiums for all involved, and the new 'Crashbreaker'. After causing a set number of wrecks, you're basically allowed to blow up your car, which not only lays waste to nearby vehicles, but can be used to launch your car into another position to trap even more unwitting motorists



Greased Lightning, go Greased Lightning!



Not to be confused with the character from Hey, Dad!



More sparks than Courtney Love and beer



After a few of these, you'll find you don't travel so well



STRUCK OUT



Thrown into the as-yet awesome audio mix are also the whiny strains of DJ Striker, resident radio host of Crash FM. Striker pops in on menus, prior to races and even in the thick of it with particularly crap quips and comments. His boundless SoCal enthusiasm isn't exactly infectious and he ends up coming across as less a hardcore supporter of illegal street racing, and more a weenie teenage try-hard. Luckily a quick trip to the options screen is all it takes to cut the announcer out of the picture, and gamers will no doubt give him the flick long before his banal commentary becomes too irritating.



The latest in hover-car technology

in your hellish traffic snarl. You can even try your hand at two-player terror in Double Impact Mode, and compete for the highest scores with up to five other mates in Party Crash Mode. The only flaw in Crash Mode is that it's a little outshone by the incredibly intense racing options.

SMOKE AND MIRRORS

Visually, the game is nothing short of stunning. BO3 is an exemplary showcase as to why so many games use the RenderWare game engine and it shows that Criterion knows its work well. Vehicles are polished to a fine sheen, and constructed complete with fine details like intakes and decals, and rev heads will notice distinct similarities to production cars. Crashes produce a hail of shattered panels and showers of sparks that will make you think someone's attacking a firework factory with an angle grinder. As you reach top gear, the scenery literally blurs around you as if the frantic pace is dislodging your eyeballs. Probably the only criticism you could level at BO3 would be the absence of weather effects and night

"The scenery literally blurs around you as if the frantic pace is dislodging your eyeballs"

racing, but wet roads and reduced visibility mean less speed, so it's an understandable omission.

Sound effects are probably a bit overstated, but for larger-than-life arcade action like this, it's on the money. As the souped-up cars whip through the gears, you'll hear transmissions clunk and blow-off valves hiss. Slow motion crashes become a surreal experience as chimes and haunting vocals fade in and out. Dropping the nitro sounds more like a jet aircraft taking off than a turbocharger, and with a decent surround sound setup, you'll be able to hear the opposition's engines humming, and wince at the impact as you feel every smash.

FULLY SICK TUNES, BRO

While Criterion has mustered admirable in-house efforts

with the music for the *Burnout* games in the past, with the stroke of EA on board, it's licensed tracks all the way. Racers are treated to over forty contemporary rock tracks including artists like Autopilot Off, Yellowcard and Sugarcult, with the odd classic mixed in for good measure. Even if there's a track that you don't like, or just doesn't have a driving beat, you can individually limit them to only playing in particular game modes or disable them altogether. Even in the worst case scenario, a quick tap of the L2 button will skip on to the next song and you're psyched and ready to redline again.

Aside from the autocidal behavior, the great beauty of the *Burnout* series is that you can't just drive like a granny at any time (even by that definition, you'd be referring to a psychotic octogenarian with a penchant for caning along busy city streets at breakneck speed). With your *Burnout* bar supplemented for taking risks, playing it safe means that the competition can just throw caution to the wind and get back into contention. Similarly, if you find yourself in last place after a nasty smash, if you're willing to have a shot at white-lining it between two oncoming semis, it's quite possible to get back amongst the pack. The fact that any race is entirely open at all times makes for an incredibly intense experience, and the determining factor is the skill of the driver, and not the random allocation of some goofy power up (yeah, you know who you are!).

Burnout 3 expands on everything previously achieved and manages to further innovate. With stacks of tracks, cars, game modes, online support and a pulse-pounding pace, this gem will appeal to more than just the car nuts. Drive really, really, really fast to your nearest games retailer and grab it – stop lights are optional. **Nick O'Shea**

OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	09	Clean, crisp and clear with copious car-nage
Sound	09	Revs, rams and riffs to get you fired up
Gameplay	10	Pure, unadulterated arcade-style speed freak thrills
Lifespan	09	Modes up the wazoo and sweet, sweet online play

Without a doubt, arcade racer of the year. There is no more that can be said.

10





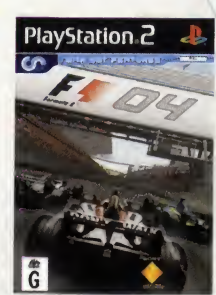
fun,
anyone?
PlayStation 2

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SECOND SIGHT

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DETAILS

DISTRIBUTOR: **ATARI**
 DEVELOPER: **FREE RADICAL**
 PRICE: **\$99.95**
 PLAYERS: **1**
 OUT: **SEPTEMBER**
 WEBSITE: **WWW.CODEMASTERS.COM/SECONDSIGHT**
 60HZ MODE: **NO**
 WIDESCREEN: **NO**
 SURROUND SOUND: **NO**
 ONLINE: **NO**

BACK STORY

In case you've been living under a rock for the past three years UK developer Free Radical is responsible for the acclaimed PS2 shooters TimeSplitters and TimeSplitters 2. It's served up Second Sight for us to nibble on while it finishes up TimeSplitters 3: Future Perfect.

BETTER THAN

PSI-OPS

WORSE THAN

SPLINTER CELL:
PANDORA TOMORROW

LAB TEST

What they nailed this time

Breaking new ground with an original story and inventive abilities

What they need to fix

What, no multiplayer?

Every now and then a great game comes straight out of left field, so to speak. Not that we were expecting any less from the Nottingham geezers who unleashed the always spectacular TimeSplitters series onto an unsuspecting public, but Second Sight could've been only too easy to ignore... If it wasn't so damn good, that is. Lucky for you we're here to tell you about it.

Save for a few minor foibles, Second Sight is one of those games that seems to get everything right; gorgeous graphics, sublime gameplay, crazy characterisation and a time-bending, physics-stretching plot that would knock Stephen Hawking straight out of his wheelchair.

Armed with a veritable arsenal of uber-cool psychic powers and equally cool hardware, you'll take control of one very powerful but extremely confused man.

Don't be thrown off by the first few levels, because even though you have no idea what's going on, there's no reason to pack it in, grab your receipt and storm back to the shops. With a little patience, each mission will get you tantalisingly closer to the full picture, the final revelation beckoning you all the way to the dying seconds. The truth really is out there, and it's up to you to find it.

WHO? WHAT? WHERE?

We don't want to reveal too much about the story; suffice to say we'd be ruining one of the most rewarding PS2 experiences this year and would risk the Free Radical lads hopping on a plane to come and teach us a well-deserved lesson, baseball bats at the ready. We'll

certainly give you an appetiser, though.

Awakening from a coma in what appears to be a secret US medical facility, John Vattic remembers nothing. This isn't your regular Saturday morning hangover, though, and there's something much more sinister afoot than a few too many Extra Drys. Trundled down a corridor, swimming in and out of focus, two guards chat about his shrouded past. One of them mentions he's a psycho killer, the other that his past is classified. The next thing he knows, he finds himself strapped down and locked in an observation room. Suddenly a bizarre force engulfs Vattic's body and snaps his bonds. Vattic is a mangled mess after countless operations and surgical experimentation and his fragile mind can't even recall his own name, let alone the events leading up to this moment. And he certainly can't explain why he seems to possess some rather incredible psychic powers. What he does seem to know is that for some reason his only hope of survival is to escape and decipher the mystery that led to his imprisonment.

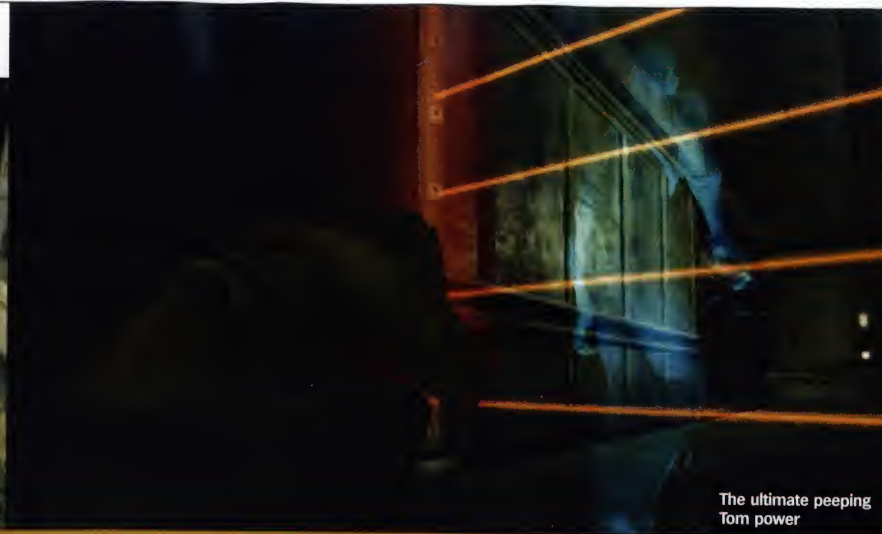
Haunted by flashbacks, Vattic recalls he was part of a top-secret mission to Siberia to investigate psychic research six months prior. A mission that went wrong, and Vattic believes he may be responsible. He begins a desperate search for survivors of the mission to unravel the mystery but what he finds is a past with no present, a present with no past and a future that might not even exist. Forgive us if we're being a little cryptic, but needless to say that underneath this utter disregard for the laws of physics and the space-time continuum is a deadly conspiracy of the highest order. It's all up to the

DOUBLE TAKE



One of these fellows is Dr John Vattic, mentally unstable videogame hero. The other is former Midnight Oil frontman, Peter Garrett. We think they look remarkably similar, but then again, maybe it's just because neither of them have any hair.





The ultimate peeping
Tom power



unassuming Dr John Vattic, psychic extraordinaire, to bring it all crumbling down.

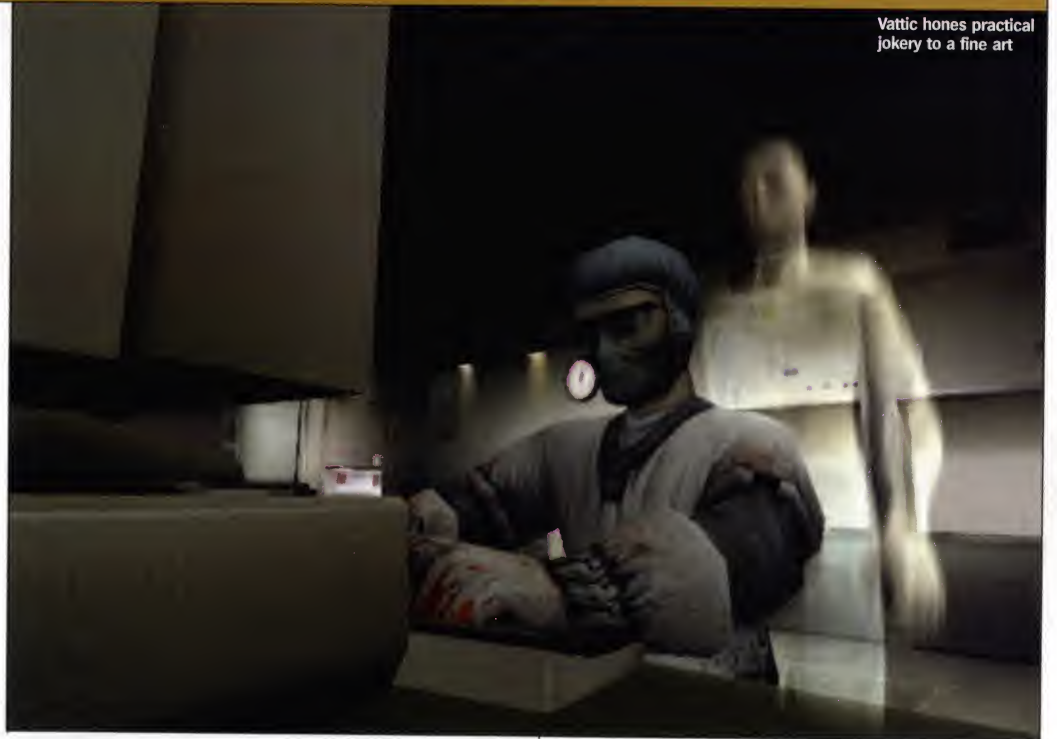
THE POWER OF ONE

A third-person shooter, *Second Sight* bucks the trend of its Free Radical brethren and instantly breaks new ground. The third-person approach allows a much more flexible camera system that can incorporate more strategy and stealth than a regular FPS. There's two different viewpoints available; a close camera that tracks Vattic but restricts peripheral vision somewhat, and a more distant camera that allows you to see more of the environment to scope out potential threats and possible routes. Make sure you use the latter and don't go blindly charging around corners. Having the element of surprise will almost always see you through, but if your enemy gets the drop on you there's a better than average chance they'll raise the alarm. If they do, you'd best get out of sight quick smart lest you be set upon like an incompetent goalie having the snot beaten out of him by a Brazilian soccer crowd.

Third-person shooters are nothing new, and stealth games are becoming almost as common as rally games, so what is it that makes *Second Sight* worthwhile? Sure it looks great, but you already own plenty of great looking games, don't you? But how many games do you own that allow you to throw people around the room, render yourself invisible, possess your enemies, and interact with the environment via telekinesis? Here *Second Sight* reinvents the genre, because the added dynamic that these extremely powerful abilities add to the game is immeasurable. All of a sudden, solving even simple puzzles takes on a whole new element, and gamers are presented, in stunning style, with something often lacking in videogames: choice.

Vattic's unique psychic abilities, in addition to his stealth and firearms skills, mean every player will find their own way to tackle not only each level, but every room and every hallway. You could strut around with your submachine gun cocked, mercilessly ventilating any hapless guard who stumbles into your path. However, you'd be seriously missing out on some of the coolest abilities a computer generated hero has ever been endowed with.

Vattic has seven tremendously powerful and potent psychic abilities at his disposal, and a healthy combination of each of these should see you safely through to the closing credits. At the start of the game, Vattic's blossoming powers are as much a surprise to him as they are to us. Each of his powers are revealed to him (and us) in moments of severe stress and often unleashed in a most spectacular fashion. At first Vattic's psychic skills are a little rudimentary; you won't be able



Vattic hones practical
jokery to a fine art

If you think that's fun, wait until you're able to use your ghost to possess your enemies

to do much more than flick a few switches and levitate garbage bins. As you progress though, Vattic's psychic arsenal is widened. Eventually, he'll be able to use his psychic power to completely heal himself, generate blasts of stored psychic energy, render himself invisible to the human eye and leave his physical body as a ghostlike form. Vattic's existing powers can also be upgraded so your telepathic abilities will eventually see you able to pick up other people and smear them on the walls or thrust them off balconies. You can even use one hand to pick them up and the other to fill them with lead while they hang suspended helplessly in mid-air. And if you think that's fun, wait until you're able to use your ghost to possess your enemies. You can almost see the confusion on their faces as you use what three seconds ago was their comrade to send them on a one way trip to digital hell. Your powers are represented by a blue meter underneath your health bar. It drains with use, but it'll recharge not unlike the focus meter in *Enter the Matrix* so you needn't worry about being a stingy psycho.

CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE

Play *Second Sight* however you want



Second Sight lets you decide how to tackle your own problems. Even just taking care of a few guards is a flexible exercise. You could scare them away with a floating keyboard, use your charm ability to nonchalantly stroll past them, smash them into the roof or possess and creatively kill them. Failing that, for those of you with no imagination we suppose a bullet between the eyes will always work too.

BACK FROM THE FUTURE

Second Sight may be one story, but it's split between the past and the present in a kind of dual narrative structure. Not only do you play as John Vattic in the present trying to uncover his own reality and come to terms with his almost unbelievable situation, but Vattic's flashbacks each appear as fully playable episodes in the game. Your first flashback is a training level and will be invaluable for you in both the past and present storylines.

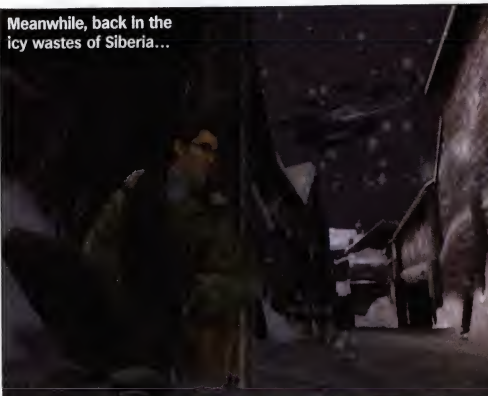
These flashbacks occur regularly and reveal fresh clues about the mystery surrounding Vattic's imprisonment. Going back six months ago when he did not have his psychic abilities (or did he?) adds an entirely different gaming experience.

In the present you'll find Vattic is mostly outgunned and must use stealth and cunning to survive, but six months ago in Siberia he was part of an elite team called WinterICE and with his trusty sniper rifle in his oversized hands things were a little less one sided.

Needless to say you'll be dispatching plenty of goons, and having a blast while doing it. The targeting system works well; a reticule will appear once you've locked onto your target and by using the right analogue stick you can fine tune your aim to hit specific parts of their body. Note to the wise, a head shot drops them every time.

But perhaps the greatest element of *Second Sight* is the way in which the two timelines are woven together. Bringing a level of interaction with the story

Meanwhile, back in the icy wastes of Siberia...



that hasn't been matched in recent memory, you really feel your actions are having a massive impact on the direction of the story. You'll be constantly re-evaluating how Vattic came to be in this state. For instance, you may find that people he's connected with who have died in the past can be saved in the flashbacks to reappear in the present. But that's all we're saying, no more, okay?

Fans of *TimeSplitters* will be instantly familiar with the unique Free Radical-style visuals we all know and love. With its premier heritage, looking great was a given for *Second Sight*. The character models are first-class and the environments are lavished with detail. Vattic's powers are also well realised with great effects, the best being his Psi-Blast, a burst of energy that gently warps the surroundings not unlike Homer Simpson reclining in the *SpineMelter 2000*.

The interface works well too, and you will be able to switch between powers or weapons with relative ease by using the D-pad.

It's hard to poke holes in such a great title but there are a few problems with *Second Sight*. It's not uncommon to be spotted by unseen enemies because you've forgotten to change the camera to a view that shows you where they are. There are also occasions where your objectives aren't really all that clear. For the most part, the puzzles and problem solving elements

With its premier heritage, looking great was a given for *Second Sight*

work really well, but there'll be occasions where you'll be left scratching Vattic's cue ball head.

For those after a unique and varied gameplay experience with a story that would give many a science professors sleepless nights, look no further than this gem. *Second Sight* is truly a rewarding game that's definitely worth looking into. **A Luke Reilly**

OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	09	Jaw dropping visuals with plenty of eye candy
Sound	09	Perfect atmosphere and voice acting is spot on
Gameplay	09	Great mix of standard action with unique flair
Lifespan	08	You might need two attempts to understand it

Stylish, gripping and great fun, Free Radical's new puppy is... well, radical.

09

OUT OF TIME

The time jumping nature of the story is more than just a gimmick, it's essential you get your head around it otherwise you'll be left in the cold come the last level. Pay attention, and don't take anything on face value. You've been warned.



Playing sillybuggers with the fixtures can be fun!





fun, anyone?
PlayStation®2

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The visuals are somewhat murky – but suitably so



ACTION

CONFLICT: VIETNAM

Good morning, Vietnam! Today, the weather forecast is rain. Bullet rain

DETAILS

DISTRIBUTOR: TAKE 2
DEVELOPER: SCI/PIVOTAL
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1-2
OUT: NOW
WEBSITE: WWW.CONFLICT.COM
60HZ MODE: YES
WIDESCREEN: YES
SURROUND SOUND: YES
ONLINE: NO

BACK STORY

Belonging to the same series as the popular Conflict: Desert Storm games, Conflict: Vietnam takes the action out of the desert and into the jungle. Here's betting the next Conflict: game will be based on WW2.

Vietnam was most famous for two things: giving the hippie movement an excuse to exist, and just happening to be a very brutal guerrilla (hit-and-run) war. What this meant was that soldiers would sneak around a while, tread on a few mines, be ambushed once or twice, and then any remaining soldiers that weren't too mangled would do the same to the enemy.

Conflict: Vietnam does away with this as much as possible considering the setting, preferring to up the action ante and create a bullet ballet John Woo would be proud of. This is not a realistic representation of war. Rather, it's a stylised action equivalent, where the heroes won't die from a single bullet, bandages will heal all kinds of damage, and yet the enemy gains no such privileges. The odds tend to be evened somewhat due to fact there are many, many more of the enemy.

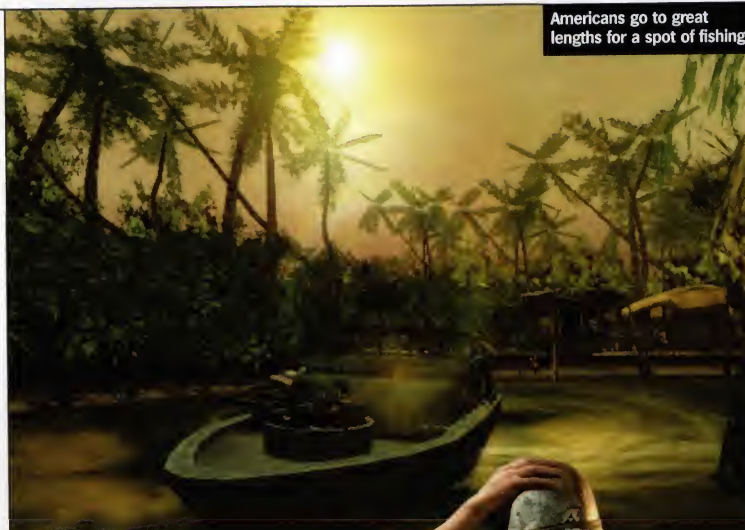
The good news is, despite some weaknesses, it largely succeeds at this kind of gameplay. The scene is set in an American war camp. The camp radio is blaring, planes fly overhead, bombs explode in the background. After completing a few basic tutorial missions, you are sent on a mission through some lush forests, before happening on a traditional Vietnamese village, complete with enemies playing the old 'disguised civilian' trick. Following that, the team returns to camp only to ward off a huge scale assault by Vietcong forces.

The game is squad based, and it expects players to look after each of the four soldiers in the team at all times. It's possible to control each member, switching between them, and it's also possible to give commands, telling teammates to move to a specific location, hold their position, or just follow the character currently being controlled. When not being directly controlled, the other soldiers in the squad will automatically fire at any enemies they spot, which is useful, as their aiming skills will often be vastly superior to yours.

This is the most significant issue with Conflict: Vietnam; a sometimes dodgy targeting system, especially when in first person or zoomed in while using a sniper rifle. Here, there is no auto targeting – a feature that is a lifesaver when in the regular third person, and suddenly, clunky controls become deadly slow and inaccurate. As a result, it's best not to use those options, rendering weapons like the sniper rifle best left for your AI mates.

Conflict: Vietnam shines brightest when the large set-piece battles occur. Bullets fly from all angles, cries of anguish and curses spring up and pure chaos reigns. Under the spray of bullets, many enemies fall, and a few allies join them. The superb sound effects and murky, but appropriate visuals combine to create a loud, explosive and canvas of war. **Matthew Sainsbury**

Americans go to great lengths for a spot of fishing



CHERRY GAINED A LEVEL + 1 SHOTGUN

Yep, Conflict: Vietnam features a levelling up system. At the end of each mission, you will be awarded a number of points based on how well the mission was completed. These points are split between the members of the squad, and can be used to improve skill levels in a variety of categories: from pistols, assault rifles and grenades, through to medical ability. While this ability to customise a soldier's speciality is nice, it is nonetheless a hollow system that is quite obviously a lazy way for the developers to control the game's learning curve.



BETTER THAN

CONFLICT: DESERT STORM 2

WORSE THAN

KILL SWITCH

LAB TEST

What they nailed this time

The bullet-happy squad action. And the music

What they need to fix

Aiming and the first-person controls are unwieldy

OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	07	Slightly washed-out, but it looks like war-torn Nam
Sound	09	Anything with a Rolling Stones song is good
Gameplay	08	Solid, and full of heart pounding action
Life span	06	Not spectacular enough to invite a second run

A quality "bullet ballet" look at the Vietnam War. No subtlety here, but damn, it's fun. For a war...

08

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CRISIS ZONE

No, not your local games store during a sale – the game, you goofball

DETAILS

DISTRIBUTOR: SCEA
DEVELOPER: NAMCO
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1
OUT: SEPTEMBER
WEBSITE: WWW.NAMCO.COM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: YES
ONLINE: NO

BACK STORY

Namco's Time Crisis series is nearly a decade old, and has had faithful conversions to Sony's home systems since the 32-bit days. Crisis Zone is a machinegun-wielding side-story that is set between Time Crisis 2 and 3.

BETTER THAN

TIME CRISIS 2

WORSE THAN

TIME CRISIS 3

LAB TEST

What they nailed this time

The ability to interact with the surroundings... blast it all!

What they need to fix

Overdone gun smoke haze that lets you see diddly-squat

Recently, the multinational Garland Electric established a structure on the outskirts of London as an experiment in residential cell living. The Garland complex encompasses a hotel, shopping mall, park and office building, such that Garland employees need never worry about commuting to work or being far from their families, so are able to focus more on their work. Out of the blue, a terrorist organisation known only as the U.R.D.A. takes over the complex under the command of mastermind Derrick Lynch. You fill the flak jacket of Claude McGarren, a decorated soldier in the Special Tactics Force. Dispatched by the British Government, your mission is to liberate the complex at all costs.

READY... ACTION!

Anyone familiar with the Time Crisis formula will pick up Crisis Zone quickly. For the most part, it follows the traditional formula laid out by the light gun series of capping some terrorist butt, ducking for cover to reload and repeating over and over. Instead of hiding like a pansy behind walls and crates, Claude carries a full-length riot shield that provides protection from small arms fire, melee attacks, tank shells and, well – everything. The main change is with your default armament. Unlike the previous games that have you packing a pop gun, Crisis Zone has you armed with a HK MP5K submachine gun.

As you'd expect, playing with your default weapon as a full auto machinegun is significantly different to most other shooting games. Each enemy has a life bar that

needs to be totally depleted with a stream of shots to kill them, but most baddies will flinch in pain if you just wing them. Playing the game is mainly a case of keeping just enough lead in everybody that they can't retaliate while clearing the area as fast as possible.

You can expect the usual array of colour coded foes to shoot. The U.R.D.A. soldiers pop out from behind just about everything as well as run and dive between and their death and movements are fully animated. Namco have it down to a fine art to occasionally misdirect the player by having one enemy leap out as a decoy while the deadlier ones attack from the background. These deceptive waves keep you guessing, and will take quite a few plays through before you get the hang of it. The boss battles are still epic, and while they do have patterns, they still require a considerable level of concentration and sustained focus.

As you're blazing away, a good portion of the time your view will be partially obscured by debris and dust. Very little is spared from your 9mm justice, and anything that isn't nailed down can be destroyed. This adds a lot to the chaos, because not only do you have to look for foes jumping out, but also spot them through the copious amounts of debris concealing them. Strategically, you can use this to your advantage. Between popping caps into the bad guys you can purposefully clear the area of destructible objects to give you a less obscured view. It almost becomes distracting, as it's a lot of fun to mow through a sports store's





PLAY-TEST



merchandise, shatter countless windows and reduce park monuments to rubble.

IT'S A DUST UP!

Crisis Zone is a precise conversion of the arcade game, made up of four stages of the Garland Park complex. The mall, park and office levels can be played in any order, and after they're cleared there's a final boss stage. Once you manage to clear the Garland Park levels, an all-new scenario of similar length is available for play, adding significantly to the replay value. In addition, there are quite a few weapons to unlock including dual machine guns, but they're hidden away in a training mode. It's a bit of a mixed blessing though, because the training missions are unbelievably hard.

A significant change from the arcade version is the inclusion of a haze of gun smoke whenever you fire. It seems this has been included as an alternate to repetitive muzzle flashes. This may make the game marginally more accessible, but it's more than a little irritating across various levels.

For a small submachine gun, rattling off a few rounds produces way too much white smoke. The almost ever-present haze dulls the palette of an otherwise colourful game, and makes enemies and incoming fire harder to discern. The red-bereted grenadiers are a perfect example of this, and when they lob their grey grenades against a grey background, behind the smokescreen they're practically invisible.

It could be argued however, that the gun smoke adds the strategic element of having to scan your

surroundings, but penalising a player for shooting in a shooting game seems pretty pointless.

The two-shot configuration system used in the previous PS2 Namco shooters has been abandoned this time around, reverting to the older single shot. While the single shot is still accurate, it's just not quite as precise as the two shot method. To put it in perspective, when you're talking about an automatic weapon, once your first shot is fired, it's a simple case of adjusting your aim and 'walking' the fire across to your next target.

REHASH! I MEAN... RELOAD!

The game provides a fresh spin on the usual *Time Crisis* gameplay, without losing its intensity. It's just a shame that *Crisis Zone* had to be released after *Time Crisis 3*, as the strategy and weapon selection system in *Time Crisis 3* outweighs the somewhat novel, yet cool features of *Crisis Zone*. **Nick O'Shea**

OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	07	About the same as the previous games - adequate
Sound	07	Plenty of BANG! AAARGH! and KABOOM!
Gameplay	07	Meaty machinegun justice, held back by minor flaw
Lifespan	06	Perfect conversion with added scenario and training

A solid arcade blaster in its own right. This is still a recognisable *Time Crisis* release, with some welcome variation.



WHAT'S MISSING FROM THIS PICTURE?

Sadly absent from the home version of *Crisis Zone* is the full-sized semi-replica of the Heckler and Koch MP5K that you're spoiled with in the arcade version. The gun is so large and weighty that you need both hands to hold it, and comes equipped with an internal recoil system for an authentic feel. Though the standard G-Con 2 does the job and won't tear your arms off during extended play, you can't help but admit it's not quite as much fun as its larger cousin.



The flashlight helps you recognise handy objects

Mulder's paths are much more action packed

SURVIVAL-HORROR

THE X-FILES: RESIST OR SERVE

Contrary to the title, this game has nothing to do with bondage

DETAILS

DISTRIBUTOR: **VIVENDI**
DEVELOPER: **BLACK OPS**
PRICE: **\$49.95**
PLAYERS: **1**
OUT: **NOW**
WEBSITE: **HTTP://THEX-FILES.VU GAMES.COM**
60HZ MODE: **NO**
WIDESCREEN: **YES**
SURROUND SOUND: **YES**
ONLINE: **NO**

BACK STORY

Are you a fan of Knockout Kings or Street Hoops? If so, you owe Black Ops a warm, fuzzy thank you. Of interesting note, they were actually around halfway through the PS2 Bond videogame of The World Is Not Enough when the publisher canned it. Ouch – all that work for nothing.

Apparently, the truth is out there. At least that's what Chris Carter's *The X-Files* preached to scores of anxious viewers through its tales of paranormal activity, alien theory and government conspiracy. But *The X-Files* was, like, so 1997, and with the aliens gone, it seems the only truth *The X-Files* ultimately revealed was that Carter made a crater full of cash and will "spend the rest of his life". However, another truth is that if you want more dough you should sell your successful (but quickly aging) license to another medium – to videogames.

Sarcasm aside, *Resist or Serve* is actually damn decent. It's certainly much better than that dollop of poo that was *Alias* and at a worthier price. It's a survival-horror game where you're thrust into a scary setting with minimal firepower, and must progress by finding clues and objects and fending off zombies along the way.

Dynamic duo Mulder and Scully are called upon to investigate a murder in the tiny town of Red Falls. The locals, however, believe it was perpetrated by Wicca-practicing teenage twins from the trailer park and are out to hang the adolescents in a public execution. It's up to the pair to solve the case quickly before the girls are hunted down. At least that's what you think is happening as everyone in the town turns out to either be dead or a zombie. Pretty soon it becomes apparent that the whole affair is tied to government conspiracies, aliens, and Mulder's role in the apocalypse. "Oooohhhh," we all say.

Split into three episodes, *Resist or Serve* keeps you

playing by wielding omnipresent suspense rather than knuckle-chewing fear. It's made accessible and less tedious through friendly level design that stops you trouncing around aimlessly, and a handy *Silent Hill*-esque flashlight that causes useful objects to flicker.

Most Impressive Is the sheen. The models are superb, cut-scenes well directed, and the environments all in 3D and the characters are voiced by their real-life counterparts – including Duchovny and Anderson.

The main downside is that the combat just doesn't match up to the rest of game's fairly high standard. You have to slug your way through zombies while conserving ammo and using melees – quite the chore. Combine that with some unimaginative enemies (damn those wolves on the Russian level) and it's clear the combat needed some tweaking. So it's not 100% perfect. Neither are you. **A James Ellis**

IT'S LEGIT!
X-Files fans will not be disappointed. *Resist or Serve* has equivalent production values to the ones seen in the TV show. It's just like an episode – and a good one at that!

OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	07	Great environments need to frequently load
Sound	09	Magnificent. We love the violins
Gameplay	06	Suspense powers you through average combat
Life span	06	Lots of unlockables, plus Scully and Mulder's paths

It's doesn't have the impact of a meteorite, but *Resist or Serve* will prove a boon for X-Files fans.

07

"Red Falls: the happiest place in the world!"

BETTER THAN

RUN LIKE HELL

WORSE THAN

SILENT HILL 3

LAB TEST

What they nailed this time

Stellar production values put you in the show

What they need to fix

The combat needs to be more interesting and less rigid

FOXY SCULLY

A great reason to play through this game more than once is to play each mission as Mulder or Scully. Each plays differently, with Mulder pursuing the paranormal and action-orientated, while Scully is more scientific. Not only that, but in some acts the characters explore totally different levels. For example, Act V sees Mulder exploring a Russian experiment camp while Scully is raiding a biotechnology centre.



Anderson's (and Duchovny's) voices feature in the game

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PLAY-TEST

DJ: DECKS & FX / JACKIE CHAN ADVENTURES



MUSIC SIM

DJ: DECKS & FX

Show yo skeelz on tha' wheelz o' steel... fo' real!

DETAILS

DISTRIBUTOR: SCEA
DEVELOPER: RELENTLESS SOFTWARE
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1
OUT: NOW
WEBSITE: WWW.AU.PLAYSTATION.COM
60HZ MODE: NO
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO
ONLINE: NO

Unlike most music editing software available for PS2, *DJ: Decks & FX* isn't just a matter of dropping samples into a mixer.

Relentless Software has crafted an entire DJ setup in 3D, incorporating twin turntables, equalisers, a sampler, effects deck, loop machine and cross fader.

The first thing you gain an appreciation of from *DJ: Decks & FX* is the technical and creative aspects of being a DJ. There are dozens of knobs, dials and functions to learn. Luckily there is a reasonable tutorial mode that covers it all for you, and three different modes that offer varying levels of assistance, all the way to the studio where you can record your work for playback at your leisure. For added authenticity, you can even hook up your *SOCOM* headset to listen to the track you have cued, so you can drop it smoothly into the mix.

There is a vast variety of virtual vinyl to cut on the wheels of steel, but you'd be lucky to have

heard of any of the artists unless you spend your weekends waving glow sticks by strobe light.

DJ: Decks & FX does require a great deal of creativity, patience and coordination, but it's a good starting point for budding DJs, and beats the hell out of dropping several grand on the gear you need to achieve the same effect. **Nick O'Shea**

OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	07	Simple yet stylishly realised
Sound	07	Pumps the bass line, but could do with more artists
Gameplay	09	The interface can be a bit tricky to get the hang of
Lifespan	08	Limited by your creativity and patience

A good simulation, but only remotely interesting to those Titans of the Turntable in training.

08



ADVENTURE

JACKIE CHAN ADVENTURES



Who turned the colour dial to "Crazy"?

Hit the road Jack, and don't come back

DETAILS

DISTRIBUTOR: SCEA
DEVELOPER: ATOMIC PLANET
PRICE: \$99.95
PLAYERS: 1
OUT: NOW
WEBSITE: WWW.ATOMICPLANET.COM
60HZ MODE: YES
WIDESCREEN: NO
SURROUND SOUND: NO
ONLINE: NO

It's easy to be a little cynical about the *Jackie Chan Adventures* animated series, but at least it's a risk free job for a 50 year old man who's broken far too many bones, skull included. A new generation is embracing the master with cracked fingers, but with the attention span of gnats, *Jackie Chan Adventures*, would always have to hit the PS2 quickly to cash in on unsuspecting parents.

As Jackie Chan you'll travel the world searching for talismans and protecting us from ancient Chinese demons and a clan of ninjas called the Dark Hand.

The visuals are encouraging and the EyeToy mini-games are a mildly entertaining diversion. Atomic Planet has set out to capture to look and feel of the cartoon and it's really nailed it.

However, the visual flair can't hide the major issues with the gameplay. The camera is a problem, and the combat is tragic. Jackie Chan is a man with more moves up his sleeves than a champion chess player, but his

digital counterpart has nothing more than a handful of half-baked kicks and punches. Even after you unlock his special abilities, most of the fights disintegrate into meaningless button-bashing.

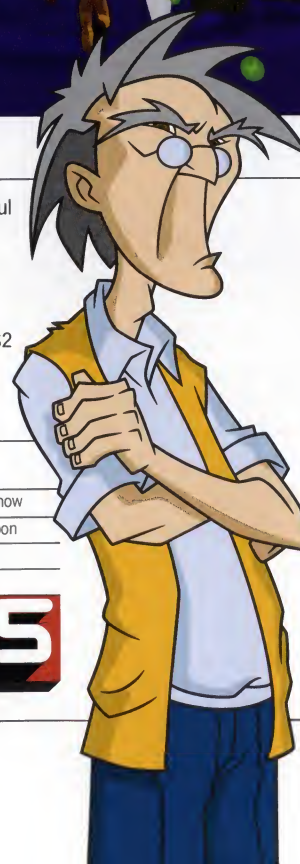
We have no doubt kids will lap this up, but unfortunately the fearless hyena's first strike on PS2 has turned out to be little more than a bumble in the Bronx. **Luke Reilly**

OFFICIAL VERDICT

Graphics	05	Your PS2 won't sweat but it's faithful to the show
Sound	04	Bog standard stuff from a bog standard cartoon
Gameplay	04	Standard kiddie fare; basic and not too fun
Lifespan	04	As short as the kids who will want to play it

As dubious as the drunken master's grasp of English. Looks good, plays bad. A bit like Anna Kournikova really.

05



T3



SHOOT



FIX



PRINT



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Recommended viewing for your PlayStation 2 cinema system



Watcha gonna do when they come for you?

Colors

Director: Dennis Hopper **Starring:** Robert Duvall, Sean Penn, Maria Conchita Alonso, Don Cheadle, Damon Wayans **Distributor:** MGM **Rating:** M15+ **Out:** Now

FILM: Causing a stir with its graphic depiction of the LA gang situation, *Colors* was soon lost among a glut of similar films, not least as the wildly popular *Boyz n the Hood*. No doubt making an appearance on DVD now to capitalise on Sean Penn's newfound success, it is nevertheless a film worth preserving on DVD.

Hodges (Duvall) is a cop seeing out the final year of his career in a special anti-gang task force. Over his time he has established a rapport with the various gang-bangers, turning a blind eye to small offences so that he can make the occasional big bust. He finds himself lumped

with hot-tempered newcomer, McGavin (Penn), who thinks zero tolerance is a much better policy. **8**
EXTRAS: Only a trailer in evidence. **1**
VERDICT: Its existentialist tone leaves the climax a bit flat, but it has more drama than your average action flick and more action than your average drama.

Ultimately, however, it is the interplay between the well-developed characters that makes *Colors* memorable – Duvall and Penn levitate the movie above its many clichés by creating believable friction and camaraderie. As a piece of cultural comment and coincidentally with relevance to the early levels in the upcoming *San Andreas*, it's definitely worth watching. **JB KA**

VINEWOOD, ANYONE?

CJ and Dennis Hopper have a few things in common! What's most interesting with the re-release of *Colors* – particularly to PlayStation 2 fans – is the subject matter that it deals with. With Los Santos, the first city in *San Andreas*, CJ, the game's main character will be thrown into the deep end of a world full of gangs and drugs. *Colors*, a movie that boasted Dennis Hopper in the director's chair deals with the exact time period and location of South Central LA and is worth watching while you wait for the next *GTA* instalment!



Star Trek: Season One

Director: Various **Starring:** William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, DeForest Kelley, James Doohan, George Takei **Distributor:** Paramount **Rating:** PG **Out:** Now



FILM: For all the hoopla surrounding the original *Star Trek* series, it was not the only quality television to emerge during the '60s. This era also produced *The Twilight Zone*, *The Outer Limits*, *The Addams Family*, *Bewitched* and the longest running cartoon of all time (until it was beaten out by *The Simpsons*), *The Flintstones*. That these shows have been rerun, into the 21st Century, is testament to their creativity.

Yet of all those shows, *Star Trek* has endured best. Something about its positive outlook struck a chord with people that resonates as strongly today as it ever did.

The oft talked-about chemistry between Kirk (Shatner), Spock

(Nimoy) and McCoy (Kelley) still jazzes up the screen, and remarkably, the humour still works. Watch an episode of a '60s "comedy" such as *I Dream of Jeannie* and you'll battle to crack a smile, but a nicely-timed one-liner from Kirk will still surprise a laugh out of you. The occasional sexist note jags on the ear, the special effects are *Doctor Who* grade, and the style of acting has dated, but there's no denying *Star Trek* was light years ahead. **9/10**

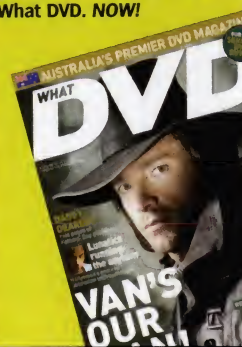
EXTRAS: Numerous trailers and a photo gallery. **8/10**

VERDICT: It's terrific that everyone came back to do interviews, but with no commentaries, gag reels or featurettes, there is very little to excite know-all Trekkies. New fans will benefit, though. **JB KA**



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EXTRA! EXTRA!

It's Sulu!

Throughout years of conventions, a story has sprung up that George Takei (Sulu) spent his time off-set terrorising Jimmy Doohan and a crew member with his fencing foil. Takei refutes this claim and explains that he was only practicing his moves and was a victim of circumstance. Yet he says it with a twinkle in his eye that really makes you wonder...



Gothika

Directors: Mathieu Kassovitz **Starring:** Halle Berry, Robert Downey Jr, Penelope Cruz, Charles S Dutton, John Carroll Lynch, Bernard Hill
Distributor: Columbia TriStar **Rating:** M15+ **Out:** Now



FILM: Prison therapist, Miranda Grey (Halle Berry) is about to find out what it's like to be on the other side of the bars. While driving in a freak storm, she swerves to avoid what she believes is a young girl standing in the middle of the road. She gets out of the car and approaches her, only to witness her burst into a ball of flame. Seconds later, Grey awakens in the mental hospital, unaware what's happened. She's informed that her husband/boss (Charles S Dutton) is dead, and she murdered him. How? Why? When? But...?

If you've seen *Stir of Echoes* or *The Sixth Sense*, or even *The Ring*, you've seen *Gothika*. While it is still a reasonable flick, but it's no more, no less, than a photocopy of every other good horror movie from the past couple of years.

Most of the scares you'll see coming, ditto the twist, but *Gothika* might still suit those with a

taste for predictable scares. Trying to make us believe Halle Berry and the rather portly Charles S Dutton are a carnal couple is entertaining – and amusing – enough in itself. **6**

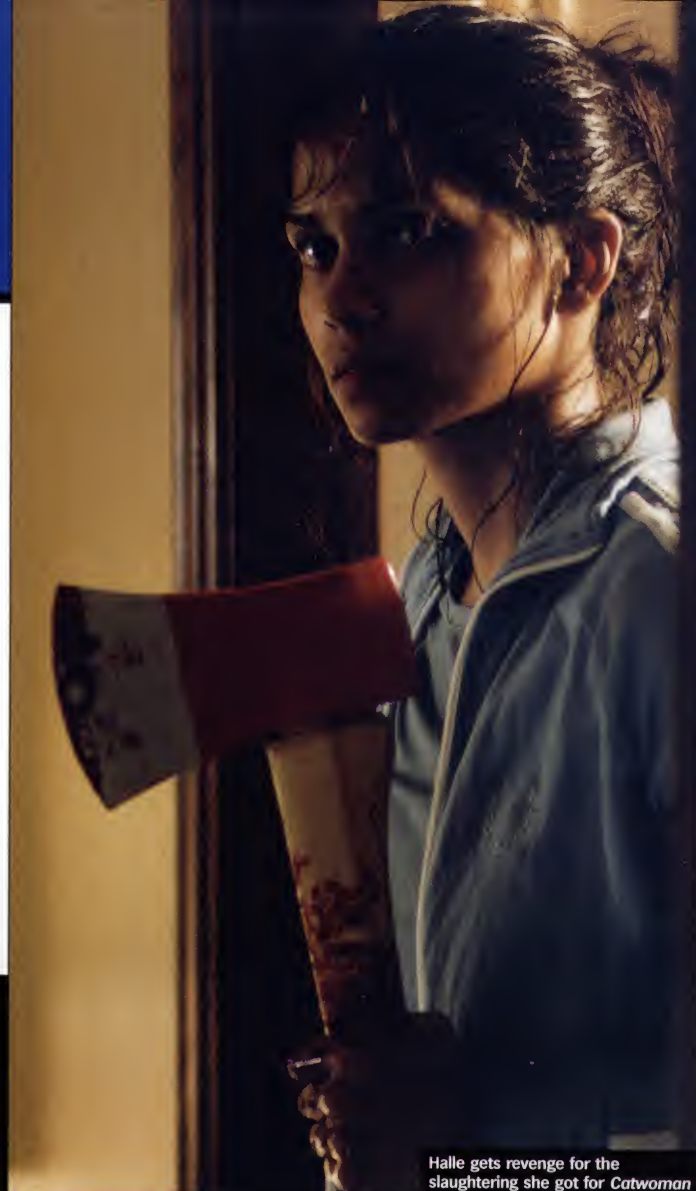
EXTRAS: Talk about a surprise lack of extras. Director Mathieu Kassovitz and DOP Matthew Libatique provide a commentary. The two pause more than a scratched-up DVD, but when they do talk, they've always got something interesting to say. There's a fair whack of trivia and inside information to be learned if throughout the film's 98 minutes. And unfortunately – besides Limp Bizkit's "Behind Blue Eyes" music video – that's about all the extras department has in stock. Kassovitz recently told us he had nothing to offer because he uses all the scenes he shoots for his film. Ever heard of a gag reel, mate? **4**

VERDICT: Unless you're a die-hard Halle Berry fan or don't give a damn about bonus features, we'd suggest a rental at best. **KA**

EXTRA! EXTRA!

Did you know?

Director Kassovitz says that while there are no plans for a *Gothika* sequel, he has been discussing the idea of a *Gothika* TV series, featuring the character Miranda Grey. We strongly doubt Halle Berry will star (unless of course *Catwoman* ruins her career entirely). It could either sink or swim – but hey, the hugely popular *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* kicked off life as just an average movie.



Halle gets revenge for the slaughtering she got for *Catwoman*

Starsky and Hutch

Director: Todd Phillips **Starring:** Ben Stiller, Owen Wilson, Snoop Dogg, Vince Vaughn, Fred Williamson, Juliette Lewis, Jason Bateman, Amy Smart, Carmen Electra, Will Ferrell **Distributor:** Buena Vista **Rating:** M15+ **Out:** Now



FILM: The latest comedy outing for Ben Stiller and Owen Wilson isn't unlike sitting through a repeat of a reasonably entertaining sitcom. If it's a show you enjoy – say *Seinfeld* – you're still amused, but because you've seen the episode before the jokes don't pay off as well. There have been so many satires of old '70s TV shows in the past few years – *I Spy* etc – that *Starsky and Hutch* comes across a bit stale.

What it does have going for it is the magnetic presence of Stiller and Wilson – and no doubt they were the reason it was green-lit and made quite a bit at the box office. For those who never caught the TV show, here's the thrust: Stiller's Mr By-The-Books, Starsky, Wilson's his rather corrupt new partner, Hutch. With the help of informant Huggy Bear (Snoop Dogg), the pair are assigned to take down a

bronzed drug dealer (Vince Vaughn).

Well executed with a few good in-jokes, some appropriate '70s music, great costumes, cars and character traits, *Starsky and Hutch* is loyal to the series while adding a few new shapes to the old stencil. For the most part *Starsky and Hutch* is quite good – just don't expect the must-buy comedy of the year. **6**

EXTRAS: Commentary, Snoop Dogg is in the first featurette "Fashion Fa Shizzle Wit Huggy Bizzle" which focuses on the different costumes the cool cat wore in the movie. "Last Look Special" is even more entertaining. It's a fake making-of in which the cast and crew rave about how much of a sucky movie it is and how they hated the experience. A good giggle. There's also deleted scenes and a gag reel. **7**

VERDICT: The film could have done with more laughs, but the extras make it a more attractive purchase than it could have been. **CM**



We wonder how funny a PS2 will look in 30 years!

DON'T GIVE UP ON ME BABY

Time Code: 0:40:10

Fans of the original series will remember that series star David Soul (Hutch) brought out a record at the time called *Don't Give Up on Me Baby*. It was a bit of a hit. In an effort to impress two females, Wilson's Hutch reaches for his guitar and starts strumming the tune. One of the funniest moments in the film.



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RE-BOOT

Buckle up for your Hard Driving 101 lesson!



Driv3r. It's been in the making for more than three years and unless you practise your driving skills you might still be trying to finish it in another three. Our crack racing team at *OPS2* has hammered out solutions for every one of *Driv3r*'s missions, as well as a section of pro tips that will teach you the art of the perfect car chase. Once *Driv3r* has been mastered it's time to move on to Part 2 of our razor sharp *Onimusha 3* playguide. Want to know how to send Nobunaga back to hell? This is the place to find out! Swing back next month for our *Spider-Man 2* guide.

James Ellis

JAMES ELLIS
Tips Editor

IN RE-BOOT THIS MONTH...

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92.....SPIDER-MAN 2.....	TIPS
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92.....SMASH COURT TENNIS 2.....	TIPS

BEAT YOUR ROAD RAGE!

DRIV3R

Every mission smashed in our expert playguide!

HOW TO LOSE THE FUZZ

When you're being chased by a cop car (or any other car that you need to lose) the following tactics will radically improve your chances of giving them the slip.

THE OLD IN AND OUT

Whenever you see a median strip with trees or poles on it, weave in and out of them as much as possible. The pursuing cars aren't too good at this and often crash.

HANDBRAKE TURN

Overtake a random car on the road, then just as you get in front of it, slam on the handbrake and pull a 180 degree turn right in front of it. This will cause the traffic car to panic and stop. Something that will hopefully fool your pursuing car into crashing it.

TRAP THEM

If you drive into a really small place, like the area between two buildings there's a good chance the other car will get

caught up on something. The more obstacles there are in the area the better.

TIGHT CORNERS

If you cut a corner really tightly (on the footpath) there are often lamp posts and trees on the edge of the footpath. Luckily the pursuing cars are suckers for smashing into these. Be careful though, this is a risky move because it's all too easy to smash into the poles yourself.

FRIED CHICKEN

If you play chicken with one of the oncoming cars, then swerve away at the last second, this often cause the car to swerve in the opposite direction and smack into your pursuing car.

So hot... but so evil



Cool players can unlock
sunnies for Tanner



MIAMI POLICE HQ

Starting off in Tanner's swish harbour-side apartment, you should notice the multiple health packs here. Come back and collect them for a top up on any of the later missions. Head outside and either take the car in your garage or the one in the car park, 50 metres to the right. Both are good, solid rides that will give you a chance to get used to *Driv3r*'s vehicle mechanics. Take your pick.

Follow the icon to the police station. There's no rush so take it easy. Once you get there you should walk in and head into the firing range in the back of the room.

There are two types of targets here: red (criminals) and blue (civilians). Obviously, shoot the red targets. You get a time bonus for every crim shot and a time penalty for every civilian. If you do well enough it's possible to get a negative 'time taken' rating for the firing range. Just completing the challenge is all that's necessary to proceed though.

LEAD ON BACCUS

Hopefully you enjoyed the leisurely drive in the first mission because it's time for the first serious mission in *Driv3r*. Run outside and jump in the car parked outside the police station.

You have to follow the police car marked with the red arrow. This is far from easy because you have to stay within roughly 20 metres of the lead car. Fall any further than this behind the car and you will have failed the mission and be forced to restart.

The best method is to trail about 5-10 metres behind the car. If you get any closer than this you will be unable to see the car turning a corner before it is too late. Keep clear of the sides of the roads as well because one lamp post of fire hydrant will end it for you.

THE SIEGE

There are two main ways you can tackle the first part of this mission. Baccus is holed up in an old building that is under siege by stacks of police. You can either shoot your way in (which leads to a slightly easier car chase) or you can hop in your car and drive in (leading to a tougher car chase). The shooting method is easier but the driving option is faster.

If you want to shoot your way in, circle around to the left until you find an open gate on a fence. Two goons will come out. Whack some bullets into them, head into the yard and do the same to the rest. When shooting at enemies you can either use the third or first-person views for targetting. Try both and find which one you prefer. As you approach the car you will trigger a cut-scene with Baccus driving out the front. Use the burnout button for a second at the start to get a quick take off, then follow him closely until he crashes.

If you want to drive in, hop in one of the police cars nearby and drive around the block to the left and head into the alley behind the building. This will trigger a cut-scene of Baccus jumping a dumpster. When you follow and take the jump yourself it's tough to avoid crashing quite often. Once you get the hang of the jump it's just a matter of chasing him until he crashes.

ROOFTOPS

Drive to the building marked on your map. Drive around to the carpark at the back of it, climb the stairs and head inside the building. Skip the first floor because there's nothing on it.

Enter the second floor, kill the two baddies and enter the last door on the left. Inside you'll have to take care of a couple of guys before you can collect the weapon on the bed. Now you should go back to the stairs and head all the way up to the roof.

Get your trigger finger ready because there are quite a lot of bad guys up here. Remember to get a red crosshair lock on the enemies before firing and you should be fine. There are also two health packs lying around, so be sure to collect these if you get low on health. When you are ready, enter the elevator and go down to the car park (where you will get to a checkpoint).

There will be a few guys to clear out in the car park. If any of the pesky guys are hiding behind cars for cover just keep pumping the bullets into the car until it blows up and kills them all.

If you're ever running low on bullets it's probably because you're not collecting the guns the enemies drop often enough. Whenever you kill someone they will drop a gun. However you only have about 15 seconds to get to them before their body (and their gun) disappears. Move quickly and you will never run low on ammo.

Once the carpark is cleared out you should head into the little office to hit the switch. Head over to the marked car and hop in. To complete the mission you have to get this car home without damaging it too much. Unfortunately there's another car outside the hotel hell-bent on having a destruction derby with you.

There are two ways to avoid this. You can either edge



Thank God there are no stakeout missions in *Driv3r*



Thankfully, everything in the game is destructible



out of the driveway a little bit until you get his attention and then retreat back into the car park. He will follow you in. Nip out quickly and he often gets caught up inside, leaving you free to drive back in peace. The other method is to get out of your car as soon as you see him and shoot the car until it explodes. Either way you will be free to drive back safely.

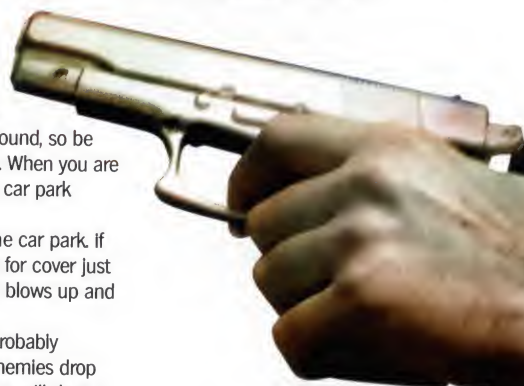
IMPRESS LOMAZ

Congratulations, you're up to the first one of *Driv3r*'s seriously cool missions. Hop in the speed boat at the back of your house and speed to Lomaz. Jump in the car next to Lomaz and drive through the construction yard, smashing everything up. Ignore the guys firing machine guns at you because they won't do much damage and killing them is not essential to the mission. What you want to do is drive into each of the buildings and explosive barrels marked on the map. You will probably have to practise this course a few times to get it right, especially the tricky jump at the end.

Once you have beaten the construction yard it's time to shoot up the bar. Drive to the location on your map, pull out your gun and run inside. The objective here is just to create as much damage as possible. Unlike the construction yard you will need to shoot any crim that you see in here or you'll wind up dead. As well as the crooks, shoot the bottles, boxes, fridges and arcade machines – basically everything you can see. If the damage bar on your screen stops filling quickly you should move on to a new area of the bar, looking for stuff to shoot.

GATOR'S YACHT

The objective for this mission is to collect three C4 charges, place them on the yacht and blow it up. There are two locations marked on your map. One is a wooden shack on the ocean and the other is the yacht. Head for the shack first. Stop your boat as soon as you see the crims and shoot them from a distance. Go a little closer and jump from the boat to the building. Shoot your way inside and collect the three



RE-BOOT

packs of C4 (one in the first room and two in the second). Get back in your boat and head to the yacht.

In the same way you tackled the building, you should stop a good distance away from the yacht and shoot everyone in sight before getting closer. There will be a flashing yellow icon at the end of each of the yacht's three levels where you need to place the C4. You can do the levels in any order. Just make your way from room to room, killing all the crims. Make sure you take a good look around each room before continuing on because there are health packs in most rooms. As soon as you have placed the third C4 you will only have a limited amount of time to get off before it blows. So when you get to the third icon, take the time to retrace your steps and make sure you have your escape route sorted.

TRAPPED

If you've seen the classic movie *Blues Brothers* then you'll love this car chase through the shopping centre. The car chase itself is easy so just have fun with it. Follow the exit signs and run over as many police as you can before smashing out onto the road.

Dodge the police cars (marked on your map in white) as you drive to the location on the map. After watching the cut-scene all you have to do is drive to the next location on your map and drive the car into the water using the ramp. If you're having trouble with the police cars in this mission check out the How to Loose the Fuzz boxout for some useful strategies.

DODGE ISLAND

Strap in for the best missions so far. You can drive the

It looks great but this isn't a good view to choose



Don't say we didn't warn you



default car all the way to the mission marker if you want but it's more fun if you smash into a motorcyclist and steal his bike. Once you get there you will trigger a cut-scene. As soon as the cut-scene ends you need to jump in your car as fast as possible and speed along, up the ramp and through the window. Do all of this as fast and as straight as possible and you will be able to get your car under the crate before it smashes to the ground (if you stuff it up you can walk around the crate the long way).

Get out of your car and shoot the two nearby crims before entering the building. The next crim will often hide behind the cover but you can edge around and shoot him easily. Shoot the two crims just outside and note the health pack in the corner to your left. Continue on through the crates, being sure to have your gun ready and keep your eyes open for the numerous health packs stashed in

At least he's not sitting on the fence





the corners of the area.

As soon as you make it out of the crates a car will pull up and guys will start firing on you. Hammer the car with bullets until it explodes, then advance on the first van. Hop into it and begin making your escape. Don't drive too fast though. There's no real urgency and if you're going fast

you're more likely to get knocked in the water by the cars smashing into you.

When a big truck cuts off your path completely (you should only be a short distance away from the other side of the harbour at this point) jump in the water and swim to your escape.

safe, collect the health pack near her and follow her as she proceeds to the van.

Although she's leading the way you can't let her stay in front or she'll get shot up too much. You need to run in front of her, looking back often to make sure you're taking the right turns. As soon as you get into the van the mission turns into an on-rails shoot 'em up. Aim mostly for the tyres of the cars to get them to crash and reload whenever there's a break. Don't worry if you have to repeat this mission a couple of times to get there in one piece.

SMASH & RUN

This mission is super frustrating but it's also stacks of fun. The first couple of times you attempt this mission will simply be test runs to master the route and find the cars, so don't stress out.

Hoon along on your bike and take a left on the first major road (it turns into an overpass bridge after a few metres). This road will take you straight to the first car, which is in an underground garage. If you've timed it well you should be waiting on the road with the car as the truck drives past.

Try to match the truck's speed as well as possible, then line the ramps up perfectly before driving inside. Press the button to get out of the car and look for another ride. Time for this mission is critical so grab the first car you can find and make your way towards the next car (parked in a private garage in a garden). The third car is in a showroom, so just smash your way through the glass and nab it. If you had to chase the truck for any more than a few blocks to stash the first two cars you may want to restart the mission because you won't have time to get the third car to the truck before it reaches its destination.

SEEING RED

Always trust the crosshair

Your targeting crosshair will normally be white, but it turns to red when you have an enemy targeted. Even if you have the crosshair completely on a target, if it's white, none of your bullets will hit them. Make sure you get a red colour before you start shooting.

Don't forget to blow up cars to get the guys behind them



RETRIBUTION

It's time to pop a cap in Gator's ass. Follow the two speeding cars, trying to shoot the escort car whenever it's in your sight. Once Gator gets out of his car you will have to hop out and shoot your way through the building. You'll need to do it fairly quickly too to avoid your buddy taking too much damage.

Once you've shot your way through the building you will need kill the two guys standing next to the boat. Jump into the boat and speed off quickly to avoid Gator's speedboat getting away. Don't try to shoot Gator's boat. Just follow it until it gets to the shack on the water.

Shoot your way into the shack, being cautious as you move through because some of the guys inside can do a lot of damage. Once you've shot your way through the shack, Gator will be waiting outside. Rather than shooting him from this bad angle, go back to the opposite side of the shack and shoot him from a distance to avoid the damage he deals out up close.

NICE WELCOME TO NICE

Drive to the location on the map as quickly as you can because Carlita is being shot to pieces. You'll only be able to get close to her in the car, so hop out and run the last few metres, killing all the goons nearby. As soon as she's

MAP IT OUT

Learn the path on chase missions

Many missions involve belting down the streets in pursuit of another car. Occasionally the cars will take different routes but nine times out of ten they will stick to a set route. Learn the route so you can anticipate when they are going to turn and be ready for it.

You're too close to the chase car if this happens



18-WHEELER

You need to sneak into a cargo yard. There are two ways to get in. You can either come down the main driveway and jump through a hole in the fence or come in via the back (jumping into the water and swimming in through a sewer). Once you're inside you need to shoot all of the crims

and climb up into the cargo lifting machine. Grab the blue crate in the middle by lifting the crate on top of it out of the way. Put the blue crate on the back of the trailer parked behind you. Get in the truck in the garage and connect it to the trailer.

As you're driving to your destination there will be a number of roadblocks. Ram these at full speed to smash through them, then park your truck at the destination.

HIJACK

Your first task is to stop the truck. As you're chasing it, cut off onto the grass to the right and use a jump to get in front of it (this saves a lot of time). As soon as you're on the main road, nudge the truck into one of the lamp posts, shoot the driver and drive the truck to its destination.

Take the car you find here to the icon on the map. Be careful to stay out of the way of the cars trying to smash you as you can only handle a little bit of damage before the mission is failed.

ARMS DEAL

Getting to the location is quite easy but you'll have a tough shootout on your hands. Just take it slow, getting a target on each of the guys from a distance. Be careful because there are a couple of crims in the open garage to your left. Hop in the little van and start driving it. Unfortunately the explosives in the back can't take much punishment, so to make it to the destination you either need to lose the pursuit or shoot it. If you want to lose it try weaving in and out of the trees on the median strip. The other option is just to get out of the car as soon as it arrives and blow it up with your machine gun. Once the pursuit is dealt with drive to your destination.

BOOBY TRAP

Time for another tough but fun mission. You need to keep the car going faster than 50mph or it blows up. Don't get carried away and drive at full speed or you'll be more likely to crash and fail the mission. Try to keep the car at 55-60mph to give yourself a bit of a buffer, without making it too dangerous. When you near the destination you will see a beach off to the left. Turn carefully onto the beach and pull alongside the other car. Once Lomaz has jumped you will need to take one of the ramps back up onto the road (carefully). The car needs to be turned around but make sure your bomb bar is empty before turning around because turning slows you down a lot.

Follow the map to the destination, looking for a big driveway leading into truck yard when you get close. Keep driving around to the left until you see the truck. Drive towards the truck and jump out when you get within 10-15 metres of it so the car's bomb blows it up.

CARLITA IN TROUBLE

Drive to the truck first and pump it full of bullets until it stops driving. Try to shoot it diagonally rather than directly from behind to avoid the fire of the two guys in the back. Once the truck is disabled, rush to the house on your map and head inside. You will have to go around a corner, then up some stairs. Take it easy here because there are a number of crims packing heat inside. After clearing the area, shoot any thugs in the courtyard to your left and prepare for the second half of the mission.

Jump in your car and do a burnout to get up to speed quickly. Follow Fabienne as closely as possible along her tough route. It's helpful to have a buddy watching the map and yelling out when to take the corners because the path



If your car stays this good you're doing well



Avoid the cop cars because they handle like pigs on wheels



she takes is so tough. Once you've followed her for long enough she will get out and you can shoot her.

RESCUE DUBOIS

Drive to the restaurant and shoot your way through it. Once you get through you will face the very tough second half of the mission where you have to chase down and kill some blokes in a speeding car. Luckily there's a checkpoint here so you can keep retrying it. Fire some bullets into the car whenever you get a chance but basically you have to wait for them to crash before you can kill them.

HUNTED

Once you get to the boathouse you'll trigger a cut-scene and a very difficult escape. The only way to get out is to hop in the forklift, pick up one of the crates and drive it over to the gap in the walkway on the back wall. Get out of the forklift, climb up the ladder and use the crate (still on the forklift's raised fork) as a stepping stone to get across to one of the boats in the fenced off section.

Drive the boat out of there, stop the boat, shoot the guys in the other boats, then drive it to the nearest land. Grab a car and speed to the destination to complete your final mission in Nice.

ISTANBUL SURVEILLANCE

It's no cakewalk for your first mission in Istanbul. Keep your chase bar at about half-way so you don't lose him but you don't get too close to arouse suspicion. As soon as you get to the destination run around until you find some stairs leading down into the building. You will need to take out each guard with a silenced headshot to avoid the alarm being raised. Once you have eavesdropped on the meeting you can pull out some serious firepower and shoot your way out. Jump in your car and speed to your hotel.

TANNER ESCAPES

To destroy the enemy cars you'll have a grenade launcher and a machine gun. The machine gun should only be used when they get right up close to you. For any cars at a distance use the grenade launcher. It has stacks of ammo, so just keep firing them down the road behind you and you'll get plenty of lucky shots. After this you need to drive the boat to a safe, police-free spot, climb out and nick a car to drive to the destination.

ANOTHER LEAD

Sit back and relax for Istanbul's easiest mission. This is the last time you'll ever get it this easy, so enjoy it. Stick close to the car you're chasing to get to the destination. Shoot your way through the market until you get to the last bloke. Keep an eye out for the numerous med kits if you're getting low. Walk up to him to trigger the cut-scene and end the mission.

ALLEYWAY

This mission's initial chase sequence isn't too bad. Hop out of the car as soon as you're ambushed and shoot everyone before entering the building. Scan every corner of each room inside because the health packs are hidden quite well. Take it slowly as you move through the building, taking a quick look in each room to assess positions, then backing off and edging out to take them one at a time. Once you kill everyone in the courtyard you can hop in the car and escape.

THE CHASE

Grab your favourite snack, maybe take a few sedatives and settle in for the toughest mission in the game. Expect to attempt this mission 20-30 times. Whatever you do, try not to give up. What makes it tough is the gruelling route Carlita takes at full-speed. What's even worse is that her car seems to cheaply be 'on-rails' meaning that even if you catch up to her and smack into her you will not be able to knock her off course.

Do a quick 180 degree turn, tapping the accelerator twice rather than holding it down to avoid hitting the car in front. When you come to the first intersection try and cut the corner on the left, travelling between the wall and the poles on the footpath. It's tight but it's better than crashing into the traffic in the middle of the intersection.

After this you will have an easy bit before she turns off into some super tight alleys. You'll have no chance of following her successfully through these alleys until you know them like the back of your hand and can anticipate every corner.

If you just can't get through these alleys fast enough, Carlita will take a different, easier route along the main road (and not turn up into the alleys at all) about one time in every 10-15 mission attempts. So if you're finding it absolutely impossible, just keep restarting until she takes the easy route.

A little later on when she cuts through a park DO NOT follow her through it because it's almost impossible to make it through without hitting something. If you stick to the road and go around it you will only lose a few metres and will not fail the mission. A couple of corners later you will get to the bridge and cue a cut-scene. DO NOT relax because no checkpoint has been triggered. If you stuff this next bit up it's right back to the start for you.

As soon as the cut-scene ends jump out of the car and run down the steps to your left to find a boat that can be taken across the river. Grab a car and chase her to the next cut-scene (which thankfully does trigger a checkpoint).

The next chase sequence on the bike is even tougher than the car chase BUT it's much shorter and you should beat it quite quickly.

BOMB TRUCK

You need to pump as many bullets as possible into the truck without getting blown up by too many explosive barrels. Avoid staying directly behind it and try to shoot it as it slows to go around corners. Even better, if you can catch up to it and sit within a metre or two of the back of it the explosive barrels will sail harmlessly over your car and you can complete the mission easily.

CHASE THE TRAIN

You'll need all of your driving skills for this bit. Speed along to the left side of the train as fast as you can. There's only one corner (to the right with some buildings to the left) that you'll need to ease off the accelerator for a second to make. The rest of the time you will have to go full-speed if you want to be able to cut in front of the train before it crosses the bridge. Now you can just cruise along the tracks in front of the train until you get to the cut-scene.

Don't try to follow close behind Jericho because there will be about 50 of his henchmen running out to protect him and there's no way you can stay alive if you try and run with him. Instead take it slowly, shooting all the thugs from a distance. However, on the other hand you can't take it so slowly that your two teammates get killed. Find a happy medium and shoot your way to the little alley on your right. Edge into this slowly until you can see Jericho. From here you can get a target on him before he sees you and unload a few clips into him until the final cut-scene is triggered. Give yourself a pat on the back but don't forget there's still all the mini games to have a crack at. **B**



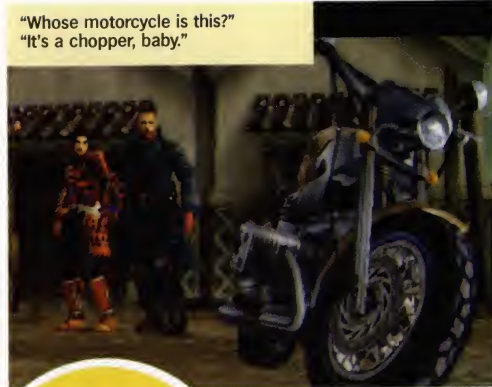
A-HA! Take this, you glowing blob of graphic glory!



"Samanosuke, you really HAVE to do something about this mildew"



"Whose motorcycle is this?"
"It's a chopper, baby."



IT'S ALL WHITE

Ako's White Vest is quite possibly the most helpful item you will find. Equip it to her, and stand still to replenish your health.

BUCKLE UP FOR OUR SAMURAI-FEST: PART TWO

ONIMUSHA 3: DEMON SIEGE

How to kick that Nobunaga's arse back to hell!

"SHORYUKEN!!"



"I do not dance like a retarded penguin on crack!"



FRANCE 2004
MICHELLE

Hooray, firearms! Head up, making free with the bullets, and look on the left to get the Soul Bracelet. Michelle can't upgrade her gear, but she can collect the souls to pass on later. If you want, you can run down into the sewer and explore a bit – there are ten grenades down there up for grabs.

Defeat the genma in the cathedral, and enter the door at the altar. Make your way to the room with the moving blade. Move around behind the blade and into the next area. Kill the Zolworms, and make your way down that path. Go through the door.

The two moving blades in this room are still operational, so move carefully. Make your way around to the next room. Kill the two Doldekkos that smash through the roof and go to the secret passage to pick up the Paris Report.

FRANCE 2004
MICHELLE

Go up the stairs on the left to get a first-aid kit, then back down and forward. Smash the bin on the right to get an Eco Spirit. To the right of the save mirror is the Zoo Flyer. Pick it up, and turn around and go left. Open the chest here and keep going up the stairs. Kill all the enemies in this next area, and continue through down the stairs. Kill the genma that breaks out of the cage and open the chest to the right of the stairs for a first-aid kit. Head further down and kill the genma that jumps out. Break the bin for an Eco Spirit and go through the door.

Kill the genma, and go past the sealed door and through the other exit. Open the chest near the barricade for a first-aid kit, and go behind the panda for a Tengu item. Continue on, breaking the bin for an Eco Spirit, and opening the chest by the door for a map. Go through the door.

Head left from here, picking up Mecha Demon 3 and breaking the bin to get an Eco Spirit, and go down the ladder. Examine the levers. The lever on the far left drops a genma. The middle-left lever drops the boat key. The middle-right lever drops another genma, and the far-right lever drops a rifle.

Go back to the save mirror, and take the passage to the right. Use the boat key on the red light on top of the boat. Kill the genma that appear. Head up the stairs and into the next area.

Go right. At the top right of the fence is a Tengu chest. Defeat the genma and go through the door. Near the locked door to the right is a light containing an Eco Spirit, and under the stairs is a chest with a Secret Med. Go through the only door that's unlocked.

Run down to the end of the cell for a joyful reunion. Before you kill the genma that jump out here, go into the cell on the left where one of the broke out from and

PUZZLE BOX 1

Move 12, 8, 7, 6 and 10 to get an Oni magic jewel

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12

open a chest to get the grenade launcher. Woohoooo!!! Kill the genma, and hit the switch to disable the cells.

SAMANOSUKE

Pick up the shiny thing on the floor – it's the soul bracelet, and you can use the souls Michelle has collected on either Samanosuke or Jacques. Head up the stairs and take out the genma. Under the stairs, you'll find a light containing an Eco Spirit. Go outside. There's a save mirror here, so use it to enhance Kuga to level 2.

Make your way back to the sealed door you passed when you were playing as Michelle. Kuga has to be at level 2 to unlock this door. Go in and pick up the Lab Building Key. You can use this to unlock the door in the room with the secret medicine and the Eco Spirit, so make your way back there. Defeat all the genma. To the left of the stairs, you'll find a puzzle box (Puzzle Box 1).

Pick up Mecha Demon 2 and check the corner of the window to get a scroll. Follow the corridor along, get ready to face Guildenstern through the next door.

Guildenstern himself is fairly easy to beat the crap out of, but his bodyguards can deal you some serious damage, so make sure you take them out whenever he summons more, the dirty coward. Once they're taken care of, wale on Guildenstern with whatever you've got. As usual, magic attacks and combos work really well, and as the battle progresses and Guildenstern starts summoning his bodyguards more quickly, you can use Onimusha mode without qualm, since they release purple souls when you kill them. Remember to hit Guildenstern when he glows, because that's when he's about to attack. If you can time it correctly, you can even hit his attacks back at him. And that's the last you'll see of him.

FRANCE 2004/1582 SAMANOSUKE

Head up the alley and pick up the book off the ground. Kill all the genma and get the Eco Spirit from the bin on the right. You can't do anything else here, so warp to Jacques.

JACQUES

No messing about this time - it's straight into another boss fight for you! Heihachi Honda hasn't changed at all. You should be stronger, though, so whip his arse good. Go to the front of the train and break the crate for an



Eco Spirit. Kill all the Barthahs, too. One of them will drop a firefly. Use it and go through the door. Open the chest right of the door to get the map, and go to the center of the room. Use Enja's magic attack to light the torches. You have to do this fast, before the gate starts moving again. Light the ones closest to the gate last in order to run through quickly. Open the chest for the Main Gate Key. Exit through the other door.

Use the firefly to get to the other side and kill the genma here before they can kill the man. He'll give you a herb as a reward. Warp the key to Samanosuke and switch to him.

SAMANOSUKE

Head to the top and use the key on the gate to get through. Head up the stairs and destroy the new Genma Mages as quickly as possible, before they drain your Oni power. Break the bin in the corner for an Eco Spirit, and open the chest next to it for the map, before heading through the only door.

Go down the path. You'll come across a plant. Kill it to reveal a chest containing the Sun Crest. Make your way back to the save mirror near where you first came in. To the left is a gate. Use the Sun Crest on it to get through. Inside, you'll find genma, a bin with an Eco Spirit and a puzzle box (Puzzle Box 2).

Absorb all the souls from the Soul Statue and kill the genma. Stand where it was to find a Tengu chest containing Ice Arrows, and open the chest nearby to get the Red Eye Stone. Go back to the warp mirror and send it to Jacques, then warp to him.

JACQUES

Go through the door and you'll find a statue missing an eye, so use the Red Eye Stone to reveal a puzzle. You need to step on the stones in order, three times. The first time, the order is Star-Sun-Moon. The second time, it is Sun-Moon-Star. The third time, it is Moon-Star Sun. If you misstep, the stone slab will come back and push you off, and the puzzle will reset. Do the puzzle three times to activate the three dragon heads on the far side of the puzzle. It may take you a few tries, but it's not too hard. Save and go down the steps that reveal themselves.

On your way down the stairs, you will see a door in the wall. This leads to Jacques' second foray into the Dark Realm. When you defeat it, you will get a Fire Seal and the

Green Orb, which Samanosuke can use in his second Dark Realm. This one is a little bit harder, but canny use of Ako's white vest and Oni power should see you through.

At any rate, after you've been there (or not), continue on down the stairs. Smash the crate to release two fireflies, and use them to swing across the roofs. Head down the passage and defeat the Genma Plant to get a chest containing an Oni Power Jewel. Go through the gate and the door at the foot of the stairs.

Defeat all the genma and break open the crate. Swing on the firefly you've released to get to a chest containing Ako's orange vest. Head all the way back and send the Green Orb to Samanosuke before switching to him.

SAMANOSUKE

Head up and through the door. Defeat all the genma, and head through the next door, up the stairs and through the next door to the save mirror. There's a Dark Realm coming up, so save. Then go back down the stairs and go through the first door on your left to get to the Dark Realm.

You can use the Green Orb on the green barrier in here to get the Purple Orb. Warp this back to Jacques so he can re-enter his Dark Realm and use it on the purple barrier to get the Wood Charm. You'll also get Ako's Purple Vest, which reduces the cost of Oni power when you go into Onimusha mode.

Once all that's done, continue down the stairs. Kill the genma and go through the door on the left. Pick up the

PUZZLE BOX 2

Move 3, 7, 2, 6 and 10 to get an Oni magic jewel

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12

"Damn – I knew I should've packed an extra sword or two ..."



"Stop squirming - this won't hurt a bit! Okay ... maybe it will ..."



"Ohhh, a hug? I'm sorry - I thought you said painful fiery death"



Rage makes you a sloppy fighter. Damn hats.



"Hah! Now I'm gonna get all glowy on yo' ass, yo!"



document in here and enter the portal to go to the alternate Arc de Triomphe. Kill all the Barthahs and the Genma Plant and go through the door. Kill the Zolworms and go through the door at the top of the stairs. Go up the next set of stairs and kill all the genma in this room. Take the Red Key out of the chest and enter the portal that appears to return to Mont-Saint-Michel. Return to the mirror and send Jacques the Red Key and switch to him.

JACQUES

Go back down the stairs and through the gate and use the Red Key on the door in here. Kill the genma and open the chest for a Medicine. Pick up the Triangle Key and exit.

You have to rescue all the slaves as you make your way back to the mirror. Each of them will give you a reward. When you're done, swing down on the firefly and head down the corridor and through the door.

Jump down and use the Triangle Key on the door.

After the cutscene, check the floor to get the Genma Plant, and to the left for a Tengu chest containing a Secret Med. Head out of this room down the stairs. You'll be in an area with soil patches. Kill the genma and use the Genma Plant on the soil patch that is "soft and well-kept". Go back to the mirror and switch to Samanosuke.

SAMANOSUKE

Examine the plant to the left to climb down it. Head to the end for a Tengu chest and break the barrel for an Eco Spirit. Defeat the genma and go through the door.

Break the barrels to get two Eco Spirits and check near the bookcase for a document. Destroy the boxes to reveal a chest containing the Iron Gear. Return to the mirror to send this to Jacques and switch to him.

JACQUES

Use the Iron Gear on the aperture to the left of the gate. Then go pull the lever on the right side of the gate to open it. Go through. Defeat the genma and the Genma Plant. Behind it you'll find a chest containing a Secret Med. Make your way down the stairs, and check near the pillar on the left for a document. Go through the door and down the stairs.

MICHELLE

Open the chest to the left to reclaim the Soul

Bracelet and go through the door. Make your way along and go through the door at the end.

Go up the stairs to find a chest. If you got the grenade launcher back at the zoo, the chest will contain grenades; if you did not, it will contain the grenade launcher. Kill the genma and go through the door. Go up the stairs and through the next door.



PUZZLE BOX 3

Move 2, 3, 7, 11 and 15 to get an Oni magic jewel

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16

SAMANOSUKE

Pick up the Soul Bracelet and go through the double doors. Kill the Doldekkko, pick up the document near the stairs and go through the door. Go down the stairs.

JACQUES

You now have to solve a memory puzzle before the room floods with poison gas and you die. A pad and a piece of paper might help, but you have one or two chances to get it wrong before the end. Also, Henri will egg you on, which is incentive enough to complete it as quickly as possible.

SAMANOSUKE

Defeat all the genma and make your way down and out through the door. Boss fight time! You remember this boss, right? The strategy is basically the same as when you fought it as Jacques, but it's a bit harder to dodge given the small space. However, your weapons should be stronger by now, which will make things a little easier.

JACQUES

Go through the door. Kill everything and pick up the document after turning the corner. Swing on the firefly, break the crate for another firefly and enter the door.

JAPAN 1582

JACQUES

Head down and break the crate to release a firefly. The next section involves pulling Icebergs along via fireflies. It's pretty straightforward, and impossible to get lost, so just break open the crates as you go and use the fireflies to pull yourself along.

When you get to the shore, go right for a chest containing the area map, and up a little to find a Tengu chest containing a Medicine. Then it's more Icebergs. This time, genma will have the fireflies, so kill any that come near you to release them. When you get to another shore, head up to find a chest containing another Medicine. Then, back to the water and right to find the last set of Icebergs. Go into the Oni Mansion.

Pick up the book from the floor and activate the red door by using the red firefly. Go through. Ignore the fireflies in here and head down to open a chest containing a Gadgemallo. Defeat it for a Medicine. Use the blue firefly and run back into the previous room to go through the blue door on Jacques' left. Go through the two doors here and activate the blue firefly. Hurry back to the first blue door near where you picked up the book and go through. Don't worry about killing the genma in here, since you're racing against time. Head up and get the firefly out of the chest. Go right to the end and defeat the genma here to get to the book, and break the wall scroll to find a chest with a Secret Med and a soul statue. Now go out and activate the firefly to get back to the main area.

Open the red door and go through. Defeat the genma and go right to swing across the gap. Activate the yellow firefly, swing back across and run all the way up to

Why NOT to stick your Katana into a power socket



activate the blue firefly in the last room. Go through the blue door and through the yellow door in the next room. If it's not open, you either did this in the incorrect order or you were too slow.

Break the wall scroll and go into the passage. Jump down the hole and kill the genma that attack when you walk forward. Swing on the firefly to get up. Save. Go to the back of the room for a cutscene and the Army Orb.

JAPAN 1582

JACQUES

This is the best place to get souls for Jacques. You don't have to hang around, but you can get enough souls here to level up everything, and you get an awesome hack-fest into the bargain. So, kill stuff until you can't take no more killin' (there's a chest with a map in the first area) and then go into the castle.

After the scene, pick up the document. You can use the Magic Mirror to enhance all your equipment here if you went on a spree in the last area. Then take the elevator down to the next level. Defeat the genma, open the chest to get the map, and go through the hole in the wall. Head down and right to get to a puzzle box (Puzzle Box 3).

Head left and pick up the book and swing on the firefly to get up onto the ledge. Defeat Marcellus and go left along the roof to get to a Tengu chest containing a Medicine. Go through the hole. Go down the stairs to get an Oni Med from the chest, then back up, and up the next flight of stairs. Get ready for a boss fight.

Vega Donna's attacks aren't too hard to avoid. When she hangs from the roof, move around a lot, because she's getting ready to launch herself at you. You can deflect her shuriken attacks just by guarding, and if you get lucky, they'll bounce off your guard and hurt her instead. Towards the end of the battle, she'll make copies of herself, so just wale on all of them. Follow your favourite mode of attack until she's toast.

PARIS 2004

SAMANOSUKE

Head to the left to find a Magic Mirror and a chest containing a First-Aid Kit, and to the right for a puzzle box.

Use the elevator to go up. When it stops, kill the

The side effects of playing with weapons-grade plutonium



"Man - first mildew, now supernatural snot."



"I told you - no whipping on the first date! ... oh, darn ..."



MIGHT AND MAGIC
A good way to get more magic attacks in is to keep changing weapons in-battle. Use one, switch, and use another. Sneaky!

genma before examining and climbing out via the emergency ladder. Go down the stairs for a Tengu chest containing an Oni Medicine.

Make your way back up, killing the Bazus. The other thing to look out for is time distortion fields. Wait till they disappear before running past them, because they'll transport you back to the beginning of the Eiffel Tower section. Kill the Bazus as quickly as possible, since they can knock you into the fields. Continue up the stairs in this manner. Hey, it's Brainstern! Still as dumb as ever, but watch out for the lightning. Collect the map from the chest on the right, and take the doorway under the stairs.

Same strategy as last time, only different genma. When you get to the power cables, climb up for a Tengu chest, and then back to the intersection, and along the next cable to get to the next area. Up some more stairs with genma and time distortion fields. When you get to the end of this set, you'll find a Gadgemallo chest and a chest containing a Secret Med. Go under the stairs here, and up the next set of stairs therein. Towards the screen you'll find a Tengu chest with Soul Arrows inside, and further inside the room, you'll find a document. Press the red button by the door to activate the elevator. Go all the way to the top. Use the Soul Statue and save. Go up the stairs to get to the top of the Eiffel Tower. It is now time to once and for all say goodbye to that candy-arse Ranmaru Mori. He is a lot faster now, so go the Ogre and whup him good (the purple vest helps).

"AARGH! It burns! It burns!"



"How many times do I have to tell you I don't want to play King Kong?"



"You can't fight it forever! Samanosuke loves me now!"



"Oh, nuts, they found my one weakness - ultra explosives ..."



JAPAN 1582 JACQUES

Go down the stairs and melee away to your heart's content. Then head back up the stairs and watch the cutscene. Up the next set of stairs is Jacques' final battle, so go over and save at the Mirror. Just to the left of the mirror is the man who grants you entrance into the Dark Realm, so if you want one final foray, go for it. It's fun, and you get the Ultimate Whip, Jacques' super weapon. To the left of the stairs is a firefly that will take you up to the roof to get a Secret Med. Then, it's time to face ... Nobunaga!

If you have the ultimate whip, this should be a piece of cake. If not, then you're going to have to get all Oni on his ass. Either way, look out for his critical attacks. Pull out all stops, and feel free to use all of your health items, since you won't be needing them again.

FRANCE 2004 SAMANOSUKE

Head over to the Magic Mirror and save. Then, if you want to do the final Dark Realm in the game, go left and talk to the hanging man. You get the Bishamon Sword, which is seriously cool, but which you won't get to use. HOWEVER, in the final battle, you will be using the Onimusha sword, and you need to have acquired the Bishamon Sword and have all your other weapons maxed out for the Onimusha Sword to be at its maximum level. Also, you need the Bishamon Sword if you want the extended ending, and it also helps your percentage completion.

If there's anything that you need to do, now's the time to do it. Go. Kill things and max out your weapons. Do the training, especially the Critical Training, which gives you Ako's black vest. When you think you're ready, plunge on.

Nobunaga again?? You should be a lot more powerful than Jacques, particularly if your weapons are maxed and you have the Bishamon Sword, making this battle so dead easy it's laughable. Just be a little sparing with your healing items ...

The first stage of the True Demon King can be pretty hairy, but as long as you can dodge his attacks, you should be okay. Just keep charging up the Onimusha Sword to the third level and attack him with that. He'll release purple souls when you do this, and when you absorb five, your sword will become even more powerful.

The second stage is a bit trickier, since his sword has a pretty long reach and his elemental attacks - which you can see coming by the glow on his sword - can do some hefty damage. Keep up with the dodging - dodge before every attack - and if you keep yourself out of harm's way as much as possible, you should be fine.

The third and final stage is, of course, the hardest, but now you should have the Genma Samonji, which will make it a little easier,

especially since, if you had the maxed out Onimusha Sword, the Genma Samonji should also be maxed out. The True Demon King in this stage deals really heavy damage, so again, keep with the dodging. Either attack straight after his attacks, when he's vulnerable, or use the Genma Samonji's special attack to wear him down. Use plenty of healing items, and you can say goodbye to Nobunaga once and for all. Really, this time.

Congratulations! You've finished *Onimusha 3: Demon Siege*. Give yourself a pat on the back, and have a beer. 🍺





ROME: TOTAL WAR

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KOTOR 2: THE SITH LORDS
MOH: PACIFIC ASSAULT
AND MORE!

ISSUE 26
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PPS55007/0603

DERWENT HOWARD



RAGNAROK ONLINE NEVERWINTER NIGHTS 2

PC GAMES ADDICT FOR WHEN IT'S MORE THAN A HABIT

PREVIEWS > REVIEWS > HARDWARE > NEWS > DEMOS & MORE

ON SALE SEP 15

CODE-U-LIKE

Need to cheat your way to victory on a certain game? Here are the codes you should use.

SYPHON FILTER: OMEGA STRAIN (SLES TBC)



With James Bond, Sam Fisher and Solid Snake all competing for super spy bragging rights, Gabe Logan faces a tough crowd, but his game has the goods to stand tall. Try these cheats out to get ahead in the game.

Unlock Budva bonus mission

Get Solo Par for Lorelei, Tokyo, Myanmar, and Zurich missions

Unlock Chechnya bonus mission

Get Solo Par for the two Yemen missions and Minsk

Unlock Italy bonus mission

Get Solo Par for the three Cahrtage missions

Unlock Kyrgystan bonus mission

Get Solo Par for the two Belarus missions

Unlock AU300 H-BAR weapon

Get Deputy Chief of Operations Rank

Unlock AU300 Mod-SMG weapon

Get Field Officer Rank

Unlock Combat Shotgun

Get Intelligence Agent Rank

Unlock G-17 weapon

Get Investigative Agent Rank

Unlock GAWS 12 Gauge weapon

Get Chief of Operations Rank

Unlock Jerico-41 weapon

Get Field Research Specialist Rank

Unlock M16 A1 weapon

Get Investigative Officer Rank

Unlock M1911 A1 weapon

Get Intelligence Officer Rank

Unlock M4 weapon

Get Investigative Operations Commander Rank

Unlock MAK-10 10mm weapon

Get Investigative Research Specialist Rank

Unlock Mark 23 weapon

Get Field Supervisor Rank

Unlock Shot Hammer weapon

Get Field Operations Commander Rank

Unlock Slug Defender weapon

Get Field Analyst Specialist Rank

Unlock SP-57 weapon

Get Intelligence Analyst Specialist Rank

Unlock Stavva M70 B1 weapon

Get Intelligence Operation Commander Rank

PSI-OPS: THE MINDGATE CONSPIRACIES (SLES TBC)



Psi-Ops is the first in a new breed of telepathic shooters. On Main Menu, highlight Extra Content and press **△** for the keypad.

Increased Hero Points and abilities

You can only use this cheat with a memory card that has no previous *Spider-Man 2*

Unlock All Powers

Enter 537893 on the keypad

Unlock Super PSI

Enter 456456 on the keypad

Unlock All Powers From Start

Enter 537893 on the keypad

Unlock Bulletproof Ability

Enter 548975 on the keypad

Unlock Unlimited Ammo

Enter 978945 on the keypad

Unlock No Head

Enter 987978 on the keypad

Unlock Arcade Mode

Enter 05051979 on the keypad

Unlock Co-op Mode

Enter 07041979 on the keypad

Unlock Dark Mode

Enter 465486 on the keypad

SPIDER-MAN 2

(SLES 52493)

Spider-Man 2 isn't just a fantastic flick, it's also one of the best PS2 action games of the year. It's no push-over though, so why not try some of these cheats?

Increased Hero Points and abilities

You can only use this cheat with a memory card that has no previous *Spider-Man 2* game saves on it. If you enter the password below more than once in a row you will have 200000 more Hero Points than if you entered it once. You can keep entering it to keep increasing your points. Entering the

password "HCRAYERT" will give you a 40% completion rating, stacks of Hero Points and various combat upgrades.

Alien Buster

Defeat Mysterio to unlock

Big Game Hunter

Defeat Rhino to unlock

Drenched Explorer

Collect all 130 Buoy Tokens to unlock

Employee of the Month

Complete all Pizza Missions to unlock

Game Master

Complete everything in the game (you'll need 100%) to unlock

Hardcore Gamer

Complete all arcade games with top scores to unlock

Lover not a Fighter

Complete all Mary Jane Missions to unlock

Shock Absorber

Defeat Shocker to unlock

Fight Arena

Beat the final Doc Ock battle to unlock

Endurance Rounds in Fight Arena

Beat Timed Round 3 to unlock

DRIV3R

(SLES 50876)



Driv3r is a fantastic adventure but it's also tough as titanium. To help you get through *Driv3r* we've collected the following cheats.

Immunity from police

△, ○, △, △, △, △, △, △

Unlimited ammo

△, △, △, △, △, △, △, △

Unlock all weapons

△, △, △, △, △, △, △, △

Invincibility (not in Story Mode)

△, △, △, △, △, △, △, △

Unlock all missions

△, △, △, △, △, △, △, △

Unlock all vehicles

△, △, △, △, △, △, △, △

PlayStation
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Press 2

PROMOTION

PlayStation®2

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-AUSTRALIA

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PlayStation®2
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Calls are charged at \$2.48 per call (incl GST).
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PIN	GAME	CHEAT
21341	Driv3r	All Vehicles
21342	Driv3r	All Missions
21343	Driv3r	All Weapons
21344	Driv3r	Immunity
21345	Driv3r	Unlimited Ammo
20111	Tak and the Power of Juju	Unlock All
20112	Tak and the Power of Juju	All Plants
20113	Tak and the Power of Juju	100 Feathers
20114	Tak and the Power of Juju	All Moonstones
20115	Tak and the Power of Juju	All Juju Power-Ups
20116	Tak and the Power of Juju	All Yorbels
22561	AFL Live 2004	State of Origin
23581	Transformers	Deep Amazon Level
23582	Transformers	Mid Atlantic Level
23583	Transformers	Alaska Level
23584	Transformers	Starship Level
23585	Transformers	Earth Level
23586	Transformers	Big Head Mode
23587	Transformers	Turbo Mode
18972	Simpsons Hit & Run	Infinite Car Health
18973	Simpsons Hit & Run	Faster Cars
18971	Simpsons Hit & Run	All Reward Cars
18975	Simpsons Hit & Run	Blow up Vehicles in one Hit
18974	Simpsons Hit & Run	Jumping Car
18976	Simpsons Hit & Run	Night Time Mode
21321	Hitman Contracts	Level Skip
20342	Cat in the Hat	Extra Life
20341	Cat in the Hat	All Levels
20343	Cat in the Hat	Bonus Door Keys
09021	Conflict Desert Storm	Cheat Menu
02151	Crazy Taxi	Secret Push Bike
04241	Crickets 2002	Super Batsman
12580	007 Nightfire	Bigger Sniper Rifle Clip
12581	007 Nightfire	Level Select
12582	007 Nightfire	Upgrade Q Gadgets
04803	Aggressive Inline	Super Spin
04802	Aggressive Inline	All Secret Characters
04801	Aggressive Inline	All Levels
15681	Bad Boys II	Unlock Everything
07891	Men in Black 2 Alien Escape	Invincibility
07892	Men in Black 2 Alien Escape	Level Select
07893	Men in Black 2 Alien Escape	All Weapons
07894	Men in Black 2 Alien Escape	Full Beam
07895	Men in Black 2 Alien Escape	Full Homing
05921	No One Lives Forever	Level Select
01554	Operation Winback	All Multiplayer Characters
01552	Operation Winback	Weapons and Ammo
01551	Operation Winback	Level Select
01553	Operation Winback	One Hit Kills
11352	Primal	Easy Kill
11351	Primal	Invincibility
19181	Prince Of Persia	Level Select
03972	Prisoner of War	All Chapters
03971	Prisoner of War	Unlimited Goodies
10173	Scooby-Doo! Night of 100 Frights	All FMV Sequences
10172	Scooby-Doo! Night of 100 Frights	All Warp Gates
10174	Scooby-Doo! Night of 100 Frights	Alternate Credits
10171	Scooby-Doo! Night of 100 Frights	All Power-Ups
17072	Secret Weapons Over Normandy	Invulnerability
17071	Secret Weapons Over Normandy	Infinite Ammo
06791	Tenchu 3 Wrath of Heaven	All Characters
06792	Tenchu 3 Wrath of Heaven	All Missions
06796	Tenchu 3 Wrath of Heaven	Hidden Mission
06793	Tenchu 3 Wrath of Heaven	Unlock All Items
06794	Tenchu 3 Wrath of Heaven	Increase Items
06797	Tenchu 3 Wrath of Heaven	Bonus Stage
06795	Tenchu 3 Wrath of Heaven	Recover Health
14262	The Getaway	Armoured Car Weapon
14261	The Getaway	Double Health
15086	The Hulk	Double Health for Enemies
15085	The Hulk	Unlimited Continues
15088	The Hulk	Half Enemies HP
15084	The Hulk	Regenerator
15082	The Hulk	Invincibility
15083	The Hulk	Level Select
15087	The Hulk	Double Health for Hulk
15081	The Hulk	Play as Grey Hulk
11813	Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon	Invincibility
11812	Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon	All Special Features
11811	Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon	Level Select
12271	Tomb Raider Angel of Darkness	Level Skip
04121	Turok Evolution	Invincibility
04123	Turok Evolution	Level Skip
04125	Turok Evolution	Invisibility
04124	Turok Evolution	Ammo
04122	Turok Evolution	Weapons
12201	Ty The Tasmanian Tiger	Show All Items
12202	Ty The Tasmanian Tiger	Unlock all Technorangs
07671	V8 Supercars Race Driver	Realistic Handling
07672	V8 Supercars Race Driver	Better Damage
01392	World Rally Championship	No Chassis
01393	World Rally Championship	Overhead View
01391	World Rally Championship	Greater Power
01394	World Rally Championship	Underwater Graphics
09343	WRC 2 Extreme	Overhead View
09342	WRC 2 Extreme	Turbo Mode
09341	WRC 2 Extreme	Master Code
09345	WRC 2 Extreme	Bouncing Cars
12864	X-Men 2: Wolverine's Revenge	Cerebro Files
12863	X-Men 2: Wolverine's Revenge	Cheat Menu

gamestation

Your definitive guide to the ever-expanding library of PlayStation 2 games

So you've just bought a PlayStation 2, and you're immediately confronted by a dauntingly huge line-up of games to choose from at your local gaming store. Now what?

GameStation is OPS2's one-stop guide to getting an idea of what's hot and what's not. As time goes on and new games come out, we drop some of the older games that don't warrant being remembered, replacing them with newer games that score well in the reviews section.

As PlayStation 2 owners we really are spoiled for choice. There is a massive choice of AAA quality games – many of which are bound to fall under your radar. OPS2 is here to make sure that not too many of them manage to slip through your fingers.

If you just want to find the best of the best, look for the games that receive a Bronze, Silver or Gold award. Enjoy your search!

GLOSSARY

Just got your PS2? It's your first console ever and you've bought the best magazine to give the latest and most up-to-date information but don't have a clue what we're going on about? Well, without wanting to patronise those gamers who've been around since the Atari 2600 by spelling out the meaning of gaming terms and acronyms in the reviews and previews, here's your 'at a glance' guide to all things PS2 and technical.

Afterburn: An extra kick of power in flight sims.

AI: Artificial Intelligence.

Analogue: Re: Dual Shock 2. Registering degrees of input, as opposed to digital's on/off status.

Boarders: Snowboarders or games featuring the alpine sport.

Coin-op: Coin-operated arcade videogames.

Cut-scene: Explanatory, non-playable scene in videogame (also 'FMV').

CPU: Central Processor Unit. Brains of PS2.

Dev kits: Programmable PS2s used by developers.

D-pad: Direction pad on PS2 controller.

Dual Shock controller: Controller for PSone.

Dual Shock 2: Controller designed for PS2 (with analogue).

ECTS: European Computer Trade Show.

E3: Electronic Entertainment Expo (US).

Frame rate: Number of images drawn per second in games. Higher frame rate = smoother animation.

FPS: First-Person Shooter (eg Quake III).

Hack 'n' slash: Refers to game (usually fantasy) featuring blade combat.

High res: High resolution (graphics).

HUD: Head Up Display. Screen furniture such as map, speedometer, etc.

Iconography: Graphical shorthand defining game, genre etc.

Low res: Refers to poor quality graphics.

L3: Pressing down on the PS2 controller's left joystick.

Mini-games: Bonus, playable games found in larger titles.

Polygon: Building block of videogame graphics.

PSone: The precursor to PS2. If you don't know what this is then frankly there's no hope for you.

Real-time: When one second of game time equals one second in the real world.

RPG: Role-playing game.

RTS: Real-time strategy.

R3: Pressing down on the PS2 controller's right joystick.

Sim: Simulation.

Strafe: Move sideways while looking straight.

USB: Port to connect peripherals such as a keyboard to PS2.

"If there's a term, word or phrase that's still taxing your brain cells, let us know and we'll include it here."

HACK - VOL 1: INFECTION

An addictive new spin on the RPG genre that takes it into new territory.

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

007 NIGHTFIRE

Aside from the occasionally iffy AI, this has enough variety to make a solid single player game, and the multiplayer gives it longevity.

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

18 WHEELER

Brash, chunky and colourful truck racer. Unfortunately it just doesn't offer enough substance to satisfy the hardened gamer.

OVERALL 06

2002 FIFA WORLD CUP

The World Cup version of FIFA 2002 with more pizzazz, nifty effects for star players and a serious challenge at the highest difficulty level, but sadly lacking in game modes.

OVERALL 07

ACE COMBAT: DISTANT THUNDER

Best Ace Combat yet. A graphically-polished flight sim with a variety of missions. Best with a flight-stick of some kind.

OVERALL 07

AFL LIVE PREMIERSHIP EDITION

Plays a better game of footy, but it's not a vast improvement over its predecessor.

OVERALL 06

AGGRESSIVE INLINE

There's more than enough inline action to keep you impressed and entertained until the next Tony Hawk says, "Buy me, dude!"

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

AIRBLADE

Intricate visuals, sublime handling, massive ails – everything you could want hoverboarding to be. Back to the Future anyone?

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

ALL-STAR BASEBALL 2002

An enjoyable all-round game of baseball with oodles of depth, and surprisingly compelling to watch as well as to play.

OVERALL 07

AMPLITUDE

An addictive mixture of reflexes and music timing. Weak graphics but great gameplay.

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

AQUA AQUA: WETRIX 2.0

Addictive, well-realised update of the N64 puzzler Wetrix. Essentially it's Tetris with water. Weird, but worthwhile.

OVERALL 07

ARC THE LAD: TWILIGHT OF THE SPIRITS

It isn't original but Arc the Lad is a welcome addition to the list of next-generation RPGs.

OVERALL 07

ARMORED CORE 2

Infinitely-tweakable first-person mech shooter. Not for the casual gamer after a quick fix, but perfect for those who love their sims.

OVERALL 07

ARMY MEN AIR ATTACK: BLADE'S REVENGE

Very dull helicopter game. Hardly surprising from arguably the worst series of games to grace a console.

OVERALL 02

ATHENS 2004

The perfect multiplayer game for the next month or two. It's not a classic sports game though.

OVERALL 06

ATV OFFROAD FURY 2

More of the same, with new tracks, riders, racing modes and plenty of good old fashioned fun.

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

AUTO MODELLISTA

The love-child of cat-shaded graphics and Gran Turismo. Despite its cartoony appearance, this is a fairly serious racing game.

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

BACKWARD WRESTLING: DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME

When they titled this brawler Don't Try This At Home – did they mean the game?

OVERALL 06

BALDUR'S GATE: DARK ALLIANCE II

Worthwhile if you're after a hack 'n' slash with D&D style, but the game shows its age worse than Cher.

OVERALL 07

YOUR KEY TO SHORTLIST

GOLD

Only for games that scored the elusive 10/10.

SILVER

Awarded to games with a mighty 9/10.

BRONZE

Given to games that scored an impressive 8/10.

SMALLER TRACKS, FEWER CARS

Games to play before the sequel makes them obsolete. Hurry.



Considering that Burnout 3 raced onto store shelves a couple of days before this issue hit newsstands, the point's a little moot, but we couldn't think of a prequel more deserving of another lap around your PS2 than Burnout 2. It's true that the recent release of Burnout 3 (turn to page 60 for our review) has taken a little of the bang out of this beauty of a racer but it still offers up some of the finest racing we've seen. It runs faster than an Aussie cyclist from a drug test and it introduced the uber cool Pursuit Mode, where you get to play a cop trying to smash a crim's car off the road before it can escape. Plus you can pick it up for under \$50 these days. Burn down to your local games store and grab a copy today!

BEYOND GOOD & EVIL

★ OVERALL 08

Compelling and original. It manages to cross multiple genres and is bizarre, unique and engaging all at once.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

BLOODRAYNE

★ OVERALL 08

BloodRayne is an explosion of sex, action and violence. It's not going to tax your mind but it's so much fun you won't care.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

BOMBERMAN KART

OVERALL 07

As much fun as four people can have with fifty bucks. It's worth it just for the original 2D Bomberman.

BUFFY 2: CHAOS BLOODS

OVERALL 07

Full of action and adventure, Chaos Bloods is a worthy addition to the Buffy legacy.

BURNOUT 2: POINT OF IMPACT

★ OVERALL 08

An even more intense racing experience than its predecessor. The Fast & the Furious in a video game.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

CASTLEVANIA: LAMENT OF INNOCENCE

★ OVERALL 09

Better whip and dungeon action than Larry Wachowski's last all-nighter at the Hellfire Club.

SILVER
PlayStation 2

CHAMPIONS OF NORRATH

★ OVERALL 08

While it doesn't reinvent the Baldur's Gate wheel, it does refine it so that even RPG haters will be charmed.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

CLUB FOOTBALL

★ OVERALL 08

The second best soccer game on PS2. Superior to the FIFA games but PES still gives it a thrashing.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

COLIN MCRAE RALLY 4

★ OVERALL 09

One for experts and newbies alike, Colin 4 is a superlative rally sim with a tank full of fun.

SILVER
PlayStation 2

CONFLICT DESERT STORM II

★ OVERALL 08

It's not perfect but it improves on its predecessor by a long shot. War may be hell but this certainly isn't.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

CONTRA: SHATTERED SOLDIER

OVERALL 07

A fantastic trip down memory lane for old school veterans, but Contra may confuse or confound the contemporary gamer.

CRASH NITRO KART

OVERALL 06

With a little spit and polish, CNK could have been in pole position, but its faults leave it lagging behind.

CRAZY TAXI

★ OVERALL 08

Arcade thrills aplenty in this no-holds-barred city-smashing racer. If you want speed, buy this now.

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

CRICKET 2004

OVERALL 07

Howzat? Not outstanding. Comes close to being great, but falls short due to the inherited flaws of Cricket 2002.

DANCE UK

OVERALL 07

Great songs (Junior Senior, Sophie Ellis-Bextor, Run DMC), excellent add-ons (non-slip mat, karaoke headset) and great value. Well worth a punt – and it'll get you back in shape!

DANCING STAGE MEGAMIX

OVERALL 07

Top sweaty disco fun, marred by a flimsy selection of songs. All together now – big fish, little fish, cardboard box.

DARK CHRONICLE

★ OVERALL 09

If you've finished FFX and need a new fix, look no further. This is top-tier RPG fare, an essential purchase.

SILVER
PlayStation 2

DEF JAM VENDETTA

★ OVERALL 08

Some more options would have made this a true champion, but it's still a worthy contender. SmackDown watch out!

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

DEUS EX

★ OVERALL 09

The thinking man's action shooter and genre-busting game that redefines expectations. Superb.

SILVER
PlayStation 2



DEVIL MAY CRY

Melding battling with lush surroundings and a superb gothic atmosphere. One of the best PS2 games yet? Definitely.

★ OVERALL 09

SILVER
PlayStation 2

DEVIL MAY CRY 2

Die-hards may cry at the new direction, but there's still enough gorgeous style and firearms in DMC2 to satisfy action junkies.

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

DISNEY'S EXTREME SKATE ADVENTURE

Just as fun as any other skater out there, just skewed toward the youngsters.

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

DISNEY'S THE HAUNTED MANSION

Aimed at younger audiences, so it's neither terribly complicated or difficult, but when all's said and done it's simple and addictive. Well-rounded and worth a few hours of exploration.

OVERALL 07

DOWNHILL DOMINATION

Downhill Domination is a fine extreme racer that should appeal to all daredevil freaks.

OVERALL 07

DRAKENGARD

An action-RPG featuring dragon-based shooting sections and beat-'em-up swordplay. Repetitive and simplistic gameplay make this little more than a brawler, but it is addictively appealing.

OVERALL 07

DRIV3R

Fast cars, slick shooting, huge cities and cinematic action make this one of the best action games on PS2!

★ OVERALL 09

SILVER
PlayStation 2

DYNASTY TACTICS 2

Dynasty Tactics 2 is purely one for the more masochistic strategy gurus. You know who you are.

OVERALL 07

DYNASTY WARRIORS 4: XTREME LEGENDS

Dynasty Warriors 4: Xtreme Legends is strictly one for the beat-'em-up fans. Just don't call it mindless.

OVERALL 07

ENDGAME

Sets a new standard in the lightgun shooter genre: Innovative, refreshing and most of all, a tonne of fun.

★ OVERALL 09

SILVER
PlayStation 2

ENTER THE MATRIX

Despite a painful lack of depth *ETM* is an enjoyable package for anyone after another dose of *Matrix* mayhem.

OVERALL 07

ESCAPE FROM MONKEY ISLAND

Adventure that includes smart visuals, witty script and intelligent puzzles.

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

ESPN NATIONAL HOCKEY NIGHT

Other hockey sims on the market with better gameplay put this in the sin bin.

OVERALL 06

ESPN NBA BASKETBALL

ESPN NBA Basketball slam dunks the competition with its slick presentation and innovative modes.

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

ESPN NFL FOOTBALL

If this game's quality was put into a local game, the results would be incredible. Until then, go for the stars and stripes.

★ OVERALL 09

SILVER
PlayStation 2

ESPN NHL HOCKEY

A fast flowing game with plenty of depth. A no-brainer for hockey fans but a still a solid game for everyone else.

★ OVERALL 09

SILVER
PlayStation 2

EVERQUEST ONLINE ADVENTURES

EverQuest Online Adventures offers rewards for the persistent, but it can be a pretty tough slog getting there.

OVERALL 07

EVIL TWIN

Adventure from the dark side of platforming. Average, so-so animation with 76 levels of twisted plot.

OVERALL 05

EXTERMINATION

Alien-inspired survival horror-fest that is set in a deserted Antarctic research base. Positively crawling with cool design innovations.

OVERALL 07

EXTREME-G 3

A neon beast of a future bike racer that requires skill and brains. Takes some 'inspiration' from the *Wipeout* series.

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

EYE TOY: PLAY

Forget the fact that it's marketed at casual gamers; give it a try, because when it comes to *Eye Toy*, seeing is believing.

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

EYE TOY: GROOVE

Groove is a victim of the diversity of its predecessor. The lack of variety offered by this dancing title undoubtedly narrows its appeal.

OVERALL 06

F1 CAREER CHALLENGE

At last, an F1 game that makes a priority of excitement and thrills over worthy but dull simulation.

OVERALL 07

FIFA FOOTBALL 2004

The best FIFA yet but it's miles behind PES3. It has all the bells and whistles, but the gameplay is still lacking.

OVERALL 07

FIGHT NIGHT 2004

If *Fight Night 2004* were a boxer, it would quite rightly quip, 'I am the greatest!'

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

FINAL FANTASY X

Nothing else needs to be said about this brilliant RPG. A classic Square adventure with next-gen presentation and production.

★ OVERALL 09

SILVER
PlayStation 2

FINAL FANTASY X-2

FFX-2 is a huge, sprawling RPG adventure that is well worth the attention of even the most casual fan.

★ OVERALL 09

SILVER
PlayStation 2

FORBIDDEN SIREN

This game belongs on the shelf of every survival horror buff. Hell – it belongs on every gamer's shelf.

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

FREEDOM FIGHTERS

Slight imperfections are swamped by an utterly addictive and clever game experience. You must play this.

★ OVERALL 09

SILVER
PlayStation 2

FUTURAMA

With a bit more of polish this could have been shinier than Bender's metal ass.

OVERALL 06

FUR FIGHTERS

Cute fluffy creatures armed to the teeth with shotguns blast each other to pieces. The toy cupboard will never look innocent again.

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

GHOSTHUNTER

It doesn't quite live up to its (huge) potential but it's original, scary, exciting and well worth a look.

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

GHOST RECON

A squad-based first person shooter that suffers from a cumbersome interface for ordering troops about, often degenerating into arcade-style run-and-gun gaming.

OVERALL 07

GIANTS: CITIZEN KABUTO

The Reaper might be cool, but loading times hamper this port of a complex PC battle game.

OVERALL 06

GITAROO MAN

If you have a PS2 collection, you should definitely have at least one game like this one in there! Check it out.

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

GLOBAL TOURING CHALLENGE: AFRICA

An impressive racer that is further lifted by clever use of interesting locations.

OVERALL 07

GRAND THEFT AUTO 3

Not quite as good as its neon-soaked, '80s prequel but it's still fantastic fun and can now be found for bargain prices.

★ OVERALL 10

GOLD
PlayStation 2

GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY

Better than *GTA 3* Cars, crooks, coke, and chaos with total freedom to do what you want. A must have for any gamer, serious or not.

★ OVERALL 10

GOLD
PlayStation 2

GRAN TURISMO 3: A-SPEC

If you didn't know already, *GT3* is the greatest racing game in the world. Speed down to the store and buy it now.

★ OVERALL 09

SILVER
PlayStation 2

GRAN TURISMO CONCEPT: 2002 TOKYO-GENEVA

A more accessible version of *GT3*, with concept cars. Perfect for those who just want to race, rather than play mechanic.

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

GRAN TURISMO 4: PROLOGUE

Has the distinct feel of being a demo, but will definitely keep racing freaks happy until *Gran Turismo 4* hits shelves.

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

GREGORY HORROR SHOW

A truly ghoulish treat for fans of the survival horror genre who fancy something a little different.

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

G-SURFERS

Futuristic racer that's improved by an innovative track editor.

OVERALL 07

GUILTY GEAR X

Pushes hard at beat-'em-up boundaries. The start of a new wave of next-gen 2D fighters.

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

GUNGRAVE

Bizarre Manga inspired shooting game with gorgeous visuals, but a distinct lack of depth to back up all that eye candy.

OVERALL 06

GUN GRIFFON BLAZE

A mech shooter for robot obsessive-types everywhere.

OVERALL 07

HALF-LIFE

The award-winning PC first-person shooter/adventure arrives on PS2 in resplendent form. An essential purchase.

★ OVERALL 09

SILVER
PlayStation 2

HARRY POTTER AND THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN

Stock standard elements and easy gameplay, but still one of the better examples of this kind of game.

OVERALL 07

HARRY POTTER: QUIDDITCH WORLD CUP

Horry Potter: Quidditch World Cup is an entertainingly original title, but lacking in variety and challenge.

OVERALL 07

HITMAN 2: SILENT ASSASSIN

A disturbingly realistic take on living the life of a hired killer. Not one for the squeamish, but it contains brilliant gaming.

★ OVERALL 09

SILVER
PlayStation 2

HITMAN: CONTRACTS

Patient assassins will be rewarded with creative gameplay, but action junkies might find the pace a bit too slow.

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

INDIANA JONES & THE EMPEROR'S TOMB

High adventure 3D platform gaming let down by some unforgivable technical issues.

OVERALL 07

I-NINJA

While *I-Ninja* is packed with varied gameplay, its original elements are largely superfluous. Worth a rent though.

OVERALL 07

JAK II: RENEGADE

Darker and more challenging than its predecessor, *Jak II* is the best platform game we've ever seen!

★ OVERALL 10

GOLD
PlayStation 2

JAK AND DAXTER: THE PRECURSOR LEGACY

A brilliant platformer from the makers of *Crash Bandicoot* that introduces two heroes you'll be seeing a lot more of.

★ OVERALL 09

SILVER
PlayStation 2

JAMES BOND: EVERYTHING OR NOTHING

Looks and plays just like the films. Maybe a little too *Metal Gear Solid-Lite* but it's perfect popcorn action.

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

JUDGE DREDD: DREDD VS DEATH

A little lightweight but the multiplayer modes and arcade missions keep *Dredd* out of jail.

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

JUICED

There's nothing wrong with *Juiced*, but with a line-up of better racers coming in 2004, it's only for the hardcore.

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

KENGO: MASTER OF BUSHIDO

A padded-out Training mode makes up for this smart ninja fighter's otherwise rather limited nature.

OVERALL 06

KELLY SLATER'S PRO SURFER

A bit too similar to *Tony Hawk* for our liking, but still the best surfing game around.

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

KILLSWITCH

As third-person shooters go, it's quite a lot of fun. Just don't go in expecting the next *Splinter Cell*.

OVERALL 07

KINGDOM HEARTS

A beautifully produced RPG with Disney and Square characters. Don't let the kiddy vibe fool you: this one's very tough.

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

KLONOA 2: LUNATA'S VEIL

Cute and cheerful platformer featuring the lovable glove-eared blue cat-rabbit hybrid. Fun stuff.

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

KNOCKOUT KINGS 2001

A more-than-competent boxing sim. Not a match for *Rocky* though.

OVERALL 06

KYA: DARK LINEAGE

A well-rounded platforming experience. Missing a few bells and whistles but very respectable fun.

OVERALL 07

LARGO WINCH

Based on a French comic character, this spy game is too linear, and lacks the interactivity that is needed to maintain a gamer's attention.

OVERALL 05

LEGACY OF KAIN: DEFIANCE

Legacy of Kain: Defiance is a fitting new chapter. Huge, bloody and pretty. Get ready to snill some blood.

★ OVERALL 08

BRONZE
PlayStation 2

LEGENDS OF WRESTLING

'Violent ballet' with a shortage of modes and options. There are much better recreations of Pro wrestling.

OVERALL 05

LE MANS 24 HOURS

Accessible for gamers daunted by sim-style vehicle handling, but has depth and thrills.

★ OVERALL 08

BR



LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING ★ OVERALL 09

Meaty button-mashing for the masses. Movie-to-game licenses are almost never this good. And it's a two-player game.



MACE GRIFFIN: BOUNTY HUNTER ★ OVERALL 08

A hype-free, classy intermesh of different styles makes for one of the most compelling games of the year.



MADDEN NFL 2004 ★ OVERALL 09

Not just for those who already love padding-up, this is a great game, whatever your tastes.



MAFIA OVERALL 07

Mafia is a slick title that could have been a classic if the driving sections weren't so dull. Close but no cigar.

MANHUNT ★ OVERALL 08

Manhunt is a solid, enjoyable stealth-'em-up with utterly engaging gameplay. Not one for the kiddies, however.



MASHED ★ OVERALL 09

The perfect multiplayer racer, but make sure you've got a MultiTap and three friends!



MAXIMO VS ARMY OF ZIN ★ OVERALL 08

Much more accessible than its prequel, with an even more engaging plot.



MEDAL OF HONOR: RISING SUN ★ OVERALL 09

A game? A movie? MOH is a gruelling experience that packs the best of both worlds.



METAL ARMS: GLITCH IN THE SYSTEM ★ OVERALL 08

If you love blowing stuff up then this will do more than whet your appetite for destruction.



METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SONS OF LIBERTY ★ OVERALL 10

A must-own, state-of-the-art tactical espionage game that's reason enough to buy a PS2. A superbly paced, gripping story.



METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SUBSTANCE ★ OVERALL 08

Incredibly comprehensive Metal Gear package for newbies but MGS2 owners will struggle to find \$110's worth.



MICROMACHINES ★ OVERALL 08

Nothing particularly 'next-gen' about this instalment of the series, but an excellent racing diversion nonetheless.



MIDWAY'S ARCADE TREASURES ★ OVERALL 08

Beer Topper alone is worth the \$40. Trust us, when this Beer touches your lips it tastes so good! A great retro collection.



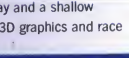
MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE - OPERATION SURMA ★ OVERALL 08

Captures the stealthy stuff perfectly but ignores the other MI staples - car chases and hot chicks!



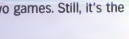
MOTO GP2 OVERALL 07

A refreshing bike racer. Slightly repetitive gameplay and a shallow multiplayer, but slick, fast and realistic. Excellent 3D graphics and race replay facility.



MOTO GP3 OVERALL 07

A little repetitive and far too similar to the last two games. Still, it's the best motorbike game on the system thus far.



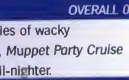
MTX: MOTOTRAX ★ OVERALL 08

Despite a few disappointing features, MTX Mototrax is worth wearing some fluorescent leathers for.



MUPPET PARTY CRUISE OVERALL 07

All your favourite Muppets battling it out in a series of wacky multiplayer mini-games. Despite some problems, Muppet Party Cruise is still a great way to party with and worthy of an all-nighter.



MUSIC 3000 ★ OVERALL 09

A mightily authoritative music title, which works as a fun diversion or a serious tool. Unmissable for wannabe bedroom artists.



MX UNLEASHED ★ OVERALL 08

A must for petrol heads. Motocross games are heading in the right direction with MX Unleashed.



NBA 2K3 ★ OVERALL 08

Not only realistic, but packed with plenty of features as well, offering a wide selection of game modes.



NBA LIVE 2004 ★ OVERALL 08

Noticeably better than 2003, but how much more can EA cram into their sports games?



NBA STREET VOLUME 2 ★ OVERALL 09

A must-own for hoop fans and anyone looking for a solid multiplayer title.



NEED FOR SPEED: HOT PURSUIT 2 ★ OVERALL 08

A must-own for hoop fans and anyone looking for a solid multiplayer title.



NEED FOR SPEED: UNDERGROUND ★ OVERALL 09

Sexy, in A1 nick, goes like a greased rat up a drain pipe, ground shaking stereo, no previous owners. It's a steal.



NFL 2K3 ★ OVERALL 09

This is the game to own for anyone into American football thanks to its ultra-realistic graphics and gameplay.



NFL STREET ★ OVERALL 08

Forget street cricket, NFL Street is so fun that it'll have kids playing it on the streets, yelling "go long".



NHL 2K3 ★ OVERALL 08

Excellent simulation settings for the die-hard fans, and plenty of arcade thrills for the rest of us.



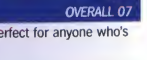
NHL 2004 ★ OVERALL 08

PS2's finest NHL romp. You'll enjoy this even if you think Wayne Gretzky is some kind of Polish Soup.



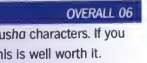
NIGHTSHADE OVERALL 07

Another hard and fast does of ninja action. It's perfect for anyone who's followed Shinobi from way back when.



ONIMUSHA BLADE WARRIORS OVERALL 06

Decent four-player fighting game featuring Onimusha characters. If you have a multi-tap, or a thirst for demon slaying, this is well worth it.



ONIMUSHA: WARLORDS ★ OVERALL 08

Impressive survival horror that lets the PlayStation 2 run riot. Does suffer from an iffy PAL conversion, though.



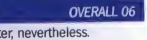
ONIMUSHA 3: DEMON SIEGE ★ OVERALL 09

Epic time-travelling samurai adventure starring Jean Reno that's destined to become classic, in anyone's books.



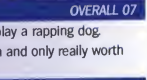
OPERATION WINBACK OVERALL 06

Lacks variety, but still an enjoyable stealth shooter, nevertheless.



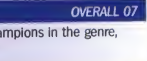
PARAPPA THE RAPPER 2 OVERALL 07

Rhythm action game from Japan in which you play a rapping dog. Simple but compelling gameplay. Short life span and only really worth revisiting for nostalgia.



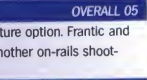
PITFALL: THE LOST EXPEDITION OVERALL 07

It's not going to dethrone any of the current champions in the genre, but it's good chilled-out fun for a while.



POLICE 24/7 OVERALL 05

Basic cop-shot light gun game with motion capture option. Frantic and fast but lacks structure and individuality. Just another on-rails shoot-'em-up.



PRIDE FC ★ OVERALL 08

The new king of the ring! Pride FC is the most realistic fighting simulation available on any system to date. Great stuff!



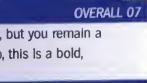
PRINCE OF PERSIA: SANDS OF TIME ★ OVERALL 09

Prince? More like the King. Ubisoft has crafted one of the greatest PS2 adventure titles yet!



PRISONER OF WAR OVERALL 07

Escaping from POW camps is all well and good, but you remain a prisoner of often rigid game objectives. Even so, this is a bold, compelling adventure game.



PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 3 ★ OVERALL 09

If you know who Kewell is you must own this. The best soccer, sports and multiplayer game on your PS2.



PROJECT ZERO II: CRIMSON BUTTERFLY ★ OVERALL 09

Quite possibly the scariest game ever made, and it also plays superbly.



PSI-OPS: THE MINDGATE CONSPIRACY ★ OVERALL 09

Takes the third-person shooter genre, levitates it in the air and makes it spank itself involuntarily.



QUAKE III ★ OVERALL 09

In four-player, this FPS is solid multiplayer fun. A technical tour de force, it runs smoothly and looks absolutely gorgeous.



RATCHET & CLANK ★ OVERALL 09

Pure platforming bliss from the company behind the original Spyro the Dragon titles on the PSone.



RATCHET & CLANK 2: LOCKED AND LOADED ★ OVERALL 09

Everything you could want in a sequel. It plays brilliantly and though it lacks innovation it's still a real charmer.



RAYMAN 3: HOODLUM HAVOC OVERALL 07

Rayman offers plenty of 'armless fun but he's no match for Ratchets or Raccoons.

RED DEAD REVOLVER ★ OVERALL 08

The classic western is resurrected with a double-barrelled dose of action and fun.



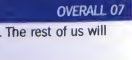
RED FACTION ★ OVERALL 08

Ace first-person shooter that melds MGS-style tactics and the all-out blasting of the hallowed Quake III.



RESIDENT EVIL: OUTBREAK OVERALL 07

Hardcore Res Evil types will love it no matter what. The rest of us will want to know where the rest of the game is.



RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN ★ OVERALL 08

Only the high standards of the FPS competition prevent this from being a truly essential buy.



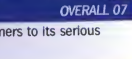
REZ ★ OVERALL 09

Exploring the relationship between sound and colour this techno shooter provides pure gameplay. Unique, and refreshing.



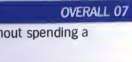
RICHARD BURNS RALLY OVERALL 07

This is a functional game intent on converting gamers to its serious discipline: the "true" rally experience.



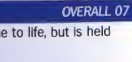
RISE TO HONOUR OVERALL 07

This is as close as you can get to being Jet Li without spending a decade in a Shao Lin temple.



ROBOTECH: BATTLECRY OVERALL 07

A cel-shaded shooter that brings the classic anime to life, but is held back by a decidedly clunky control system.



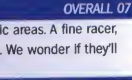
ROCKY ★ OVERALL 08

The best boxing title available for PS2. Has a great story mode that takes the player through the movies.



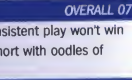
R: RACING OVERALL 07

Takes the Ridge Racer series to new, more realistic areas. A fine racer, but you'll get more bang for your buck elsewhere. We wonder if they'll stick with the new formula...



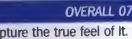
R-TYPE FINAL OVERALL 07

An old-skool shoot-'em-up fan's dream, but inconsistent play won't win legions of new fans. Makes up for being a little short with oodles of challenge and copious amounts of unlockables.



RUGBY 2004 OVERALL 07

Covers the entirety of the sport well but fails to capture the true feel of it.



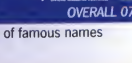
RUGBY LEAGUE ★ OVERALL 08

An entertaining game which neglected NRL fans can finally enjoy. Long-awaited, but very satisfying!



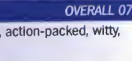
RUN LIKE HELL OVERALL 07

A refreshing sci-fi survival horror title with a host of famous names handling the voice acting.



SERIOUS SAM: NEXT ENCOUNTER OVERALL 07

Mindless violence at its golden best. Fast, frantic, action-packed, witty, gung-ho, noisy, dumb blasting!



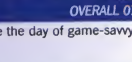
SHINOBI ★ OVERALL 08

Shinobi is the kind of frantic, shallow, old school arcade game we don't see enough of anymore. A fast and bloody good time.



SHREK 2 OVERALL 07

It's won't change your life, but Shrek 2 will make the day of game-savvy eleven-year-old boys who like to giggle.



SILENT HILL 2 ★ OVERALL 09

One of the most atmospheric and genuinely frightening titles on PS2. Like all of your worst nightmares rolled in to one game.



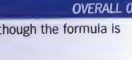
SILENT HILL 3 ★ OVERALL 09

The nastiest game on PlayStation 2 - we dare you to play it!



SILENT SCOPE 2 OVERALL 07

A worthwhile update of this arcade sniper sim, though the formula is looking tired now.



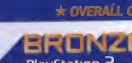
SINGSTAR ★ OVERALL 09

Karaoke with an edge. This gem is set to change your lounge room forever.



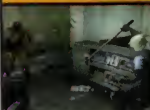
SKY ODYSSEY ★ OVERALL 08

A flight sim where you don't have to shoot anything. Just complete crazy missions.



HEAVY METAL

An early PS2 classic that's worth a second look



METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SONS OF LIBERTY

We all know MGS2's creator Hideo Kojima is more than a little crazy. It's well worth pushing past the five-plus hours of wacky cut-scenes though, because MGS2's gameplay is tighter than Solid Snake's lycra pants. Our man Snake was sneaking up and snapping soldiers' necks while Sam Fisher was still chasing his sister around the house with his water pistol. MGS2 is the granddaddy of stealth games and it's well past time you paid your respects. Before you even get near the game's final battle you will have KO'd more soldiers than there were Mr Smiths in Matrix Revolutions, fired more bullets than Rambo and rescued more gorgeous gals than James Bond. If that adventure doesn't sound worth signing up for then we don't know what does. You owe it to yourself to play it - or the slightly superior MGS2: Substance - right now!



SLED STORM	OVERALL 06
A maxed-out, splashy remake of the PSone racing classic, very much in the SSX mould.	
SMASH COURT TENNIS PRO TOURNAMENT 2	OVERALL 07
Not a bad tennis game by any stretch. Unfortunately we wanted to see a few more aces served up. Tennis fans would be better off going for the superior Virtua Tennis 2.	
SMUGGLER'S RUN 2: HOSTILE TERRITORIES	OVERALL 07
Impressively big, fast and frantic, but not much different to its predecessor.	
SOCOM II: US NAVY SEALS	★ OVERALL 08
Finally! This is it! The online game we've all been waiting for!	
SONIC HEROES	OVERALL 07
Sonic Heroes is a solid platformer that pays homage to its classic routes but the ol' hedgehog has failed to evolve...	
SOUL CALIBUR 2	★ OVERALL 09
Finely crafted gameplay, stunning visuals and a high level of polish make SCII an essential purchase.	
SPIDER-MAN 2	★ OVERALL 09
The best superhero game ever! Lovers of action-adventure or Spider-Man need this now.	
SPHINX AND THE CURSED MUMMY	OVERALL 07
If you're sick of characters crapping on and on in cut-scenes then this will be right up your alley.	
SSX 3	★ OVERALL 09
Delivers an avalanche of adrenalin rushing action, unlike any other snowboarding title out there.	
STARSKY & HUTCH	OVERALL 07
Given the lack of gameplay variety this cop caper shouldn't be as consistently enjoyable as it is.	
STAR WARS: BOUNTY HUNTER	OVERALL 07
Gorgeous to look at, taking the gamer into the Star Wars universe, but is let down by repetitive gameplay.	
STAR WARS: CLONE WARS	OVERALL 07
One for the Star Wars collectors, and a great battlefield in its own right. Shallow but still worth investigation.	
STAR WARS: STARFIGHTER	★ OVERALL 08
Mesmerising 3D Star Wars blaster with engaging missions and film-perfect sound effects. Great fun.	
STAR WARS: SUPER BOMBAD RACING	OVERALL 05
Banai cartoon kart racer. The Force is weak with this one.	
STATE OF EMERGENCY	OVERALL 06
A shallow but worryingly enjoyable game that puts the player at the centre of a riot.	
STREET FIGHTER EX3	OVERALL 06
A decent enough 2D/3D fighting game, but is milking the series to death. There are better 2D fighters from the same company.	
STREET HOOPS	OVERALL 06
More about collecting fancy duds than having a decent game of basketball, which is why this hoops title misses from the line.	
STUNTMAN	★ OVERALL 08
Won't have the wide appeal of the Driver games due to its difficulty, but it's an ingenious concept that thrills and entertains.	
SUMMER HEAT BEACH VOLLEYBALL	OVERALL 07
The best crack at beach volleyball we've seen, but nothing to really set your gaming soul on fire.	
SUMMONER 2	★ OVERALL 08
Follow-up to the RPG launch title. More action orientated than the original, but still an epic adventure for fans of fantasy.	
SUPERCAR STREET CHALLENGE	OVERALL 04
A by-the-book arcade racing game round desolate cities. Nothing to recommend it.	
SWORD OF THE SAMURAI	OVERALL 07
Sword of the Samurai is a slow, ponderous, but intelligent game that combines strategy with gore.	
TARZAN FREERIDE	OVERALL 04
Based on a Disney film of the same name, this tries to be different with 'surfing' tree branches, but it doesn't work.	

TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT	★ OVERALL 08
Fantastically playable and graphically spectacular beat-'em-up. The tagging moves make it a worthwhile purchase.	
TEKKEN 4	★ OVERALL 09
Continuing the tradition of fighting game excellence. The first Tekken game to include free-movement.	
TENCHU: WRATH OF HEAVEN	★ OVERALL 08
An infusion of ninja style and killer gameplay across nine sumptuous levels. A great return to form for a classic title.	
TERMINATOR 3: RISE OF THE MACHINES	OVERALL 06
Like Arnie, this game is a likeable dinosaur. Big guns and explosions but last-generation gameplay.	
THE GETAWAY	★ OVERALL 09
Sony's answer to Grand Theft Auto, with a decidedly darker and nastier storyline. Offers an amazingly life-like replica of London.	
THE HOBBIT	OVERALL 07
The Hobbit is a game devoid of challenge and originality, and strictly for the younger Tolkien fans.	
THE HULK	OVERALL 07
Not a smash-hit, but not damaged goods either. An enjoyable beat 'em' up; shame about those stealth sections though.	
THE SIMPSONS: HIT & RUN	★ OVERALL 08
Combine the show's best elements with the best of GTA and you've got an instant, charming winner.	
THE SIMPSONS: ROAD RAGE	OVERALL 06
It's Crazy Taxi but with Bart and Homer behind the wheel.	
THE SIMS: BUSTIN' OUT	★ OVERALL 08
Bustin' Out is slicker than the last game but without enough gameplay enhancements to make it essential.	
THE SUFFERING	★ OVERALL 08
Fans of action and/or horror should definitely NOT miss this one. It's an adventure you won't forget in a hurry.	
THE THING	★ OVERALL 08
Not only does it do justice to the classic horror film, but also introduces fear and trust issues to the survival-horror genre.	
THEME PARK WORLD	OVERALL 07
Take on the role of a theme park tycoon for a day in this engaging god sim, where pleasing the crowds and getting those turnstiles a-spinning is your prime directive.	
THIS IS SOCCER 2004	OVERALL 07
The pros outweigh the cons but the cons are annoying. TIS is not as good as Pro Evo 3, but it's certainly closing in.	
TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2004	★ OVERALL 08
The best golf game on PS2, but we're holding our breath for next year's online version.	
TIME CRISIS 3	★ OVERALL 08
Action-packed arcade bullet-fest with plenty of lure for the casual player. Very similar to Time Crisis 2 though.	
TIMESPLITTERS 2	★ OVERALL 08
Takes the multiplayer from TimeSplitters and adds heaps of options. Major visual upgrades. i-Link for 16-player games - the work!	
TOM CLANCY'S GHOST RECON: JUNGLE STORM	★ OVERALL 08
As a budget-priced tactical shooter, Jungle Storm is an absolute bargain. Spend the dollars on face paint.	
TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX 3	OVERALL 07
It falls short of being brilliant. If only it had gone that extra mile. Fingers crossed for next time.	
TOM CLANCY'S SPLITTER CELL	★ OVERALL 08
Move over Snake, Sam's the new special agent in town! Splitter Cell is an innovative game with some very cool touches.	
TOM C'S SPLITTER CELL: PANDORA TOMORROW	★ OVERALL 08
Eight new missions, superb multiplayer and some extra features make Pandora Tomorrow a brilliant package.	
TOMB RAIDER: THE ANGEL OF DARKNESS	★ OVERALL 08
A little on the slow side but there's no doubting Lara's appeal. The original superstar is back!	
TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND	★ OVERALL 08
Neversoft has turned the Hawk series into a Vice City-style adventure. And they've lost none of the charm doing it.	

TOP 5 BEST SAMURAI GAMES

1. ONIMUSHA 3: DEMON SIEGE

Capcom's razor sharp samurai slash 'em up is everything Res Evil: Outbreak should have been.

2. DYNASTY WARRIORS 4: XTREME LEGENDS

Its epic battles make other beat 'em ups look like simple schoolyard scraps.

3. WAY OF THE SAMURAI 2

The closest you're likely to get on PS2 to living the life of the samurai.

4. ONIMUSHA BLADE WARRIORS

Four player sword clanging fun for the whole family. Bring on the sequel.

5. SOUL CALIBUR 2

Okay, so there's only one samurai in it, but it's just too good a game to go past.

TRANSFORMERS	★ OVERALL 08
Intense battles, giant bosses, sweet graphics and over-the-top action! A superb fix for the shooter addicts.	
TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF LA	★ OVERALL 08
A solid shooter that takes GTA's ideas and improves many of them, but loses something along the way.	
TUROK: EVOLUTION	OVERALL 06
Boasts a wicked line-up of weapons and a variety of gaming styles, but suffers from crappy AI and frame rate issues.	
TWISTED METAL: BLACK	★ OVERALL 08
This is everything that you'd expect a Twisted Metal game to be on PS2 - and then some.	
UEFA EURO 2004	★ OVERALL 08
There are a lot of standout elements here, but the core game is yet to catch up to FIFA or Pro Evolution Soccer 3.	
UNREAL TOURNAMENT	★ OVERALL 08
Totally over-the-top first-person shooter. Makes for a nice alternative to Quake III, but is outclassed totally by TimeSplitters 2.	
VAN HELSING	OVERALL 07
A quality action title that holds true to the film and holds up against similar titles, such as the excellent Devil May Cry.	
V-RALLY 3	★ OVERALL 08
Not as instantly playable as WRC II Extreme or Colin McRae Rally 3 but effort pays off with some very satisfying racing.	
V8 SUPERCAR RACE DRIVER	★ OVERALL 08
Real damage. Real V8s. Real Aussie tracks. Real fun. The best racing game seen so far on the PlayStation 2!	
VAMPIRE NIGHT	★ OVERALL 08
A vampire-blasting light gun extravaganza that looks great but has questionable replay value once the bad boys are all put to rest.	
VIRTUA FIGHTER 4 EVOLUTION	★ OVERALL 08
Packed with things to do, VF4 still lacks the outright fun that makes Soul Calibur a game for everyone.	
VIRTUA TENNIS 2	★ OVERALL 08
Far and away the best Tennis simulation to grace the PS2. The World Circuit mode provides an awesome long term challenge.	
WAKEBOARDING UNLEASHED	★ OVERALL 08
It may be a little wet behind the ears but Unleashed has just as many thrills as its extreme brothers.	
WAR OF THE MONSTERS	OVERALL 07
War of the Monsters is a big, brash game that explodes with charm and burns brightly... but not for very long.	
WAY OF THE SAMURAI 2	★ OVERALL 08
10 days in the life of a samurai - the multiple endings are interesting and the combat is unlike any we've seen before.	
WHIPLASH	OVERALL 07
A great sense of humour and warped characters save Whiplash from obscurity as a platformer.	
WIPEOUT FUSION	★ OVERALL 08
Style and substance are here in the most fully realised Wipeout yet. This future racer is as smart and extreme as it gets.	
WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP RUGBY	★ OVERALL 08
A hard-hitting game that encapsulates everything about the sport. The best Union title available at the moment.	
WORMS 3D	OVERALL 07
Drooling Worms fanatics - you know who you are - will grab this in a flash but anyone who drinks their tequila without the little wriggly guys will want to wait for Worms 3D 2.	
WRC 3	★ OVERALL 08
An improvement over its esteemed predecessor, WRC 3 races neck and neck with McRae 04 for rally glory.	
WWE SMACKDOWN! HERE COMES THE PAIN!	★ OVERALL 08
The best there is, the best there was, and the best there ever shall be... until the next SmackDown!	
XIII	★ OVERALL 08
XIII takes the creaky old FPS and adds fresh style to make it a very worthy purchase.	
X-MEN 2: WOLVERINE'S REVENGE	★ OVERALL 08
A quality action adventure that blends stealth with hand-to-hand combat. Only a few irritations deny it a higher score.	

INSIDE GAMING

OPS2 sneaks into the Hollywood gaming studios for the inside scoop on *GoldenEye*

OPS2: So – you've been ditched in favour of a villain, have you?

James Bond: Ditched my arse. They just did it for the novelty of the thing. They'll be begging me to come back, you'll see. No-one but no-one can fill the 007 boots but me. I'm the best secret agent, ever. The best! They can't replace me! I've got all the suave moves, the hot babes, and the cool gadgets! Gadgets, I say!

OPS2: But doesn't the agent in *Rogue Agent* also have gadgets?

James Bond: Pfffft... as if you could call them gadgets... I mean, he has, what? an EYEBALL? Ooooooh, I'm shaking. Not an EYEBALL. How totally lame. I've got a pen. A pen, I say! Not to mention a watch! A watch is so much scarier than an eyeball. Just look at it! All those minutes... sneaking away... that shifty look in its little eyes... I wouldn't trust this watch as far as I could throw it, really I wouldn't. It's planning something, I know it is – I can hear it muttering in the small, dark hours of the night...

OPS2: Er... right. It is just a watch.

James Bond: Is not! Is not!

OPS2: Anyway, moving right along... how do you feel about your old foe *GoldenEye* getting so much publicity?

James Bond: Hahaha, what a joke. He's always been a bad guy, and he always will. Nobody's ever liked him, and they're not about to start. I'm not worried at all! Once a villain, always a villain, as I always say...

OPS2: You don't think seeing things from your enemy's point of view is going to skew your fans' sympathies a bit?

James Bond: Nope! Well, how could it? Look! My watch plays *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star!* and it has *My Little Pony* decals on the band! Sneaky little bugger...

OPS2: So, do you think, if you were to go head to head with this rogue agent, it would stretch your abilities at all?

James Bond: Well, if it did, it would only be to showcase how cool I am, that I can win through such outstanding odds. But I really don't think I have anything to worry about, not at all.

OPS2: He's right behind you.

James Bond: WAUGH!

OPS2: Jumpy little bugger, aren't we?



GTA SAN ANDREAS

Check back for the scoop on San Francisco and Vegas



NEXT MONTH

EYE SPY

We go behind the scenes with *EyeToy: Play 2!*

STAR WARS

First review of LucasArts' *Star Wars Battlefront!*

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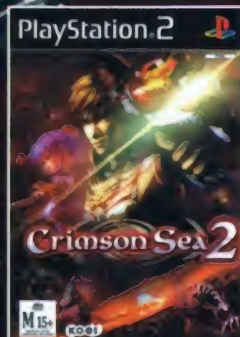
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